

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ARTS AND  
MANUFACTURES OF 1835-6: ANATOMY, BENTHAMISM AND DESIGN**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of  
Wolverhampton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2003

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# Acknowledgements

**This thesis is dedicated to my parents with love. They have always been unerring in their support and love for me and this thesis is a VERY small thank you to them.**

## **Extra Special Thanks**

I would like to thank the people that have helped me beyond the call of duty and who I would never have finished without: James Abernethy, Dr. Gillian Burdett, Jane and Bill Cooksey, Claire Foss, Helen Ham, Tony and Kathy Herbert, Tom Hicks, Kathy Mitchell, Beryl Neylan.

## **Special Thanks**

Dr. Mike Allen, Lesley Atzmon, Ray Bachelor, Professor Ed Bird, Sara Bowler, Dr. Jane Calow, Matthew Cornford, Professor Keith Cummings, Gina Douglas, Paul Greenhalgh, Cris de Groot, Dr. Linda Knight, Steve Lannin, Emma Letheren, Paul Lewis, Tom Malin, Alex Milton, Dr. Lucy Poole, Graham Powell, Debbie Shaldon, Jan Verwijnen, Dr. Nigel Vincent, Debbie Wythe (aka Roberta Kiphuth), my teaching colleagues in Alsager, the staff in the British Library.



# Abstract

This thesis is an analysis of the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures of 1835-6 and begins with an exploration of previous scholarship surrounding the Parliamentary debate. The present study offers a critique of these analyses by situating the debates alongside the policies of Philosophical Radicalism, initially exploring the legacy of Enlightenment science inherited by this group. By a consideration of the philosophies of the Benthamites, the thesis proposes that the broader concerns of the governing of society were at work within the Select Committee inquiry, suggesting that this was a core debate in which an analogy between design of society and design for manufactures was drawn.

Design in its broadest definition is therefore examined in a number of ways starting with an initial outline of the principles of good design. This analysis offers a set of criteria for judging superior or inferior design as it was established through the collective views of the inquiry witnesses. From here anatomy, which is the most considered principle of good design identified in the proceedings is focussed on. A study of anatomy is discussed in relation to traditional fine art practice and is linked to notions of creativity deriving from Neoplatonic theory, in which the artist's creativity was identified as a skill making him/her akin to a god. The question is therefore asked how this empowered sense of an artist was to fit into a Benthamite view of an automated and harmonious factory. The thesis concludes that in order for design to be conceived within such an environment, the Philosophical Radicals transformed the traditional understanding of a study of human anatomy away from an empowered creativity to a model of acceptance and servitude, where the designer was seen as reliant on the fixed laws of an autonomous society. This mirrored their own philosophies of societal management. The thesis identifies this change in model, as a contributing factor in the development of design practice and theory.

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The majority of these illustrations have been removed since the successful completion of this Doctorate in order to comply with copyright laws.

# Introduction

This thesis is an analysis of the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures, which took place during 1835 and 1836 in London. Chaired by William Ewart, the MP for Liverpool, the Committee was established:

...to inquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the Arts and the Principle of Design among the People (especially the Manufacturing Population) of the Country; also to inquire into the constitution, management and effects of Institutions connected with the Arts.<sup>1</sup>

The 1835-6 Committee proceedings reveal evidence concerning the need for a general improvement in design for British manufacture, and some of its conclusions were later debated and extended in 1849 during another inquiry,<sup>2</sup> which was chaired by Thomas Milner Gibson and steered by Henry Cole.<sup>3</sup> Yet although the 1835-6 Committee formed the first real Parliamentary attempt to consider the general relationship between manufacture and design, so creating a platform from which other debates took their lead, the inquiry itself has not been very “...extensively worked” by scholars.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, for many historians of design education in particular, the 1835-6 Committee has been considered not simply as a failure, but almost as a detriment to the cause of design. For example, Christopher Frayling (1987) has commented that “[e]veryone involved [in the Committee] seems to have known what they *shouldn't* be doing, but they spent the next sixty years arguing about what they *should*”.<sup>5</sup> This view appears to echo the nineteenth-century opinion of Henry Bellenden Ker, a member of the new National design school council in London. In an 1837 letter to Charles Poulett Thomson (the President of the Board of Trade and another member of the school committee<sup>6</sup>), Ker suggested that the information gathered by ‘Ewart’s Committee’, was “ ...without knowing how to use it or in many cases without knowing what to ask for”.<sup>7</sup> These descriptions in comments contemporary to the

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<sup>1</sup> Select Committee Minutes and Report from here known as *SC35*, *SC36* or *SCR* indicating whether the quote comes from the 1835 session, the 1836 session or the 1836 Report.

<sup>2</sup> This was the Select Committee on the Schools of Design.

<sup>3</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 224.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Frayling *The Royal College of Art* 1987, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> British Library MS Add 31218, f. 59.

<sup>7</sup> British Library MS Add 31218, f. 64.



event, as well as in modern scholarship, initially demand that some reasons are provided for studying such an apparently fruitless and confused inquiry. With this aim in mind, it is possible to find justification for a detailed study of the Committee by making a survey of previous criticisms of it.

## Survey of the Literature

The disinterest and one might even say the dismissal of the first inquiry relies on a certain approach and several assumptions that have become calcified throughout much of the scholarship on the subject. The Committee has previously been considered as a component of evidence contributing to the study of a broader subject, as has been the case in design education history, as well as research by design and manufacturing historians. Even Mervyn Romans (1998) who has made the first ‘close’ analysis of the inquiry was also concerned with other Select Committees and developments up to the middle of the nineteenth-century in his Doctoral thesis.<sup>8</sup> This traditional approach not only provides a motive for the present study in taking the Select Committee as its main subject, but also highlights the way that the inquiry proceedings have previously been compared with later developments creating an often-unfavourable contrast.

It is useful to begin with the most persistent outcome of these comparisons, which is the opinion that confusion caused by an unmanageable range of topics, inevitably made the debate ineffective. Certainly the questioning in the 1835-6 inquiry does cover a number of apparently incongruous subjects from coach painting and funerary sculpture to the organisation of gallery collections and an investigation of the Royal Academy. For both Richard Carline (1968) and Frayling writing on design education, such diversity of debate seems inevitably to lead to the conclusion that the inquiry lacked direction or muddled issues.<sup>9</sup> This impression is accentuated by design historical studies that are able to use the pages of the proceedings to discuss a range of topics from the history of lace<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See Romans 1998 PhD thesis entitled ‘Political, economic, social and cultural determinants in the history of early to mid-nineteenth century art and design education in Britain’.

<sup>9</sup> Carline *Draw They Must* 1968, pp. 75-76; Frayling *The Royal College of Art* 1987, p. 9, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> See for example Patricia Wardle (1968) *Victorian Lace*. London: Herbert Jenkins. It should be noted however that these studies rarely give the deliver the same judgement on the inquiry management.



and the evolution of graphic design systems,<sup>11</sup> to literature concerning the development of national policy on art collecting.<sup>12</sup>

If one examines the characterisation of the Committee as confused more closely, then it appears that this judgment tends to arise in the analysis of previous writers who have compared the apparent aims of the inquiry with its contents. This is perhaps due to the consideration that the aims of the Committee appear to be very clear, as Mervyn Romans has noted. This author considers that the 1835-6 discussions have been largely assumed to be a knee-jerk reaction to the increased manufacturing competition from France after 1815.<sup>13</sup> Such a motive would appear to have made the agenda very clear for those questioning, as it suggests that the inquiry should have centred specifically on the institutional design training of artisans in order to improve British sales. Although this type of discussion was a major part of the debate, the questioning regarding the status of engravers in the Royal Academy or the condition of paintings in the National collection for example, would seem to have moved the inquiry away from its goals. However, as Romans has explained, there are problems with depending on the economic argument for the existence of the Committee. He notes that the ‘simple fact’ that “...between 1780 and 1860 the British national income per head doubled, at the same time as the population more than doubled. A much larger nation became much richer”, seems to have been ignored by design education historians and nineteenth-century economists alike.<sup>14</sup> Thus Romans considers that there must have been other justification for the Committee debates and although he does not provide any one conclusive theory, he draws the discussions into more general early nineteenth-century concerns with the education of taste, which he considered to be “...the ‘cement’ that held together

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<sup>11</sup> See for example David Brett (1995) “Drawing and the Ideology of Industrialization” in DOORDAN, D. P. (ed.) *Design History – An Anthology*. London/Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

<sup>12</sup> See for example Janet Minihan (1977) *The Nationalization of Culture: the development of state subsidies to the Arts in Great Britain*. London: Hamish Hamilton.

<sup>13</sup> Romans “Politics, Economics and Art Education...” in *Art Education Discourses* 1998, p. 96. See also the texts he refers to: Clive Ashwin *Art Education* 1975, p. 8; Quentin Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, pp. 45-46; Richard Carline *ibid.* ; Stuart McDonald *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* 1970, pp. 67-68. See also Edward Bird “The Development of Art and Design Education...” 1992, pp. 99-100 and Christopher Frayling *ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Romans ‘Political, economic, social and cultural determinants...’ 1998, p. 100.

the conflicting demands of capitalism and civic humanism”.<sup>15</sup> As a design education historian Romans has provided the first contextualised analysis of the debate beyond the confines of that previously constructed by other scholars from his field. The present thesis echoes many of his reasons for challenging the traditional portrayal of the inquiry but will extend the analysis of the Committee debates into fields of design history and the history of ideas.

However before considering the form of this present examination of the inquiry, further consideration of the criticisms of the Committee in previous scholarship can be used to strengthen the motivation and method for its re-examination. As Romans has done, the dismissal of the inquiry can be challenged when one considers the work of previous scholars from the standpoint of their subject matter.<sup>16</sup> This is again particularly the case for art and design education historians who have generally seen the Select Committee as a precursor to the establishment of a Normal School of Design in 1837.<sup>17</sup> To make the Select Committee ‘fit’ within a narrative that encompasses the establishment of the Royal Academy and the later design school, scholars have been required to focus more specifically on the second half of the debate in 1836. This was the session that was predominantly concerned with an investigation into the management and teaching of the Royal Academy, a debate that therefore appears to be of significance as it provides a much-needed link in the narrative.

When one examines the contemporary correspondence surrounding the inquiry, there is some evidence to suggest that the later part of the Select Committee did effect the constitution of the school. For example, in another letter from Bellenden Ker to Poulett Thomson he explained that the appointment of George Rennie as a teacher in the new school, would “...give offence to the Academy, as it is known that he was the author of the remarks on the Academy...[presented to] the Committee of which Mr. Ewart was chairman”.<sup>18</sup> A later article from *The Spectator* also suggested that the “...jealous fears” of the Royal Academy

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>16</sup> See *ibid.* chapters 1-3 (pp. 7- 58) for an extensive discussion of the historiography of nineteenth century art and design education.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Normal’ infers that it was to be a School to train teachers.

<sup>18</sup> British Library MS Add 31218, f. 13.



demanded certain changes within the curriculum of the proposed Government design school.<sup>19</sup> Similarly the *Mechanics' Magazine* speculated that:

[i]t may not be too uncharitable to suppose, that some of the *other* witnesses before the Committee, - men who strained a point or two to prove the glaring want of a 'School of Design' in this benighted country, - will appear again as office-bearers in the new institution.<sup>20</sup>

But the actual connection between the Committee debates and the decision to establish a school is not particularly secure and indeed there is weightier evidence to support the idea that the Committee itself was detached from the founding of the new school. This is apparent because the *Report* from 1835-6 was published *after* the decision had been made in Parliament to establish a government-funded School of Design.<sup>21</sup> Some previous studies do acknowledge this point and have tried to combat the discrepancy in timing by emphasising the importance of the 1835 session instead of that of 1836. For instance, Bell claims that the School was established "...as a result of the evidence given in 1835",<sup>22</sup> while Clive Ashwin (1975) is more cautious but also considers that the "...state of affairs revealed by the early stages of the inquiry made state intervention almost an inevitability".<sup>23</sup> But even these arguments for the connection of the Select Committee debates with the new School are less than convincing if one considers that Government had approached the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK) in 1834 with the request that a school for design be set up and managed by them.<sup>24</sup> From this it would seem that the decision to form a Government-funded teaching establishment had already occurred well before the Committee had begun. So in a similar way to the challenge by Romans on the apparent cause of the Parliamentary discussions, this single fact also demands that the diversity of debate in the inquiry be considered in a different light. If one is not confined to believing that the Committee was simply about establishing a

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<sup>19</sup> Anon, Sept. 15 1838, p. 881.

<sup>20</sup> Anon, June 3 1837, pp. 131-132.

<sup>21</sup> Ashwin *Art Education* 1975, p. 10; Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 60.

<sup>22</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 60.

<sup>23</sup> Ashwin *Art Education* 1975, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup> "That Government being aware of the necessity of supplying the defect in this country not only with regard to the silk and cotton manufactures but to work in metal and to upholstery is willing to place at the disposal of this society a sum not exceeding £1 500 provided the Committee will undertake to found a school for the instruction of workmen in the principles of Art" (University College London SDUK 7 Small Minutes Book 1831-1834, 23 June 1834, pp. 18-19).

school, then the range of discussion appears to be less confused and more connected to another undiscovered agenda.<sup>25</sup> It is this unknown ‘agenda’ that is the subject of the present thesis and therefore, in contrast to previous studies, this work aims to map how the Committee debate was shaped, rather than its outcomes and consequences (although these will be sketched later in the introduction, as well as in the conclusion).

In order to begin exploring this formation of the Committee debate it is important to reconsider the stated aim of the Select Committee as it was noted at the beginning of the Proceedings - that was “...to inquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the Arts and of the Principles of Design...”. When one re-evaluates the aim in isolation, it is apparent that this objective would have demanded the discussion of a *variety* of mechanisms for the general promotion of art and design. This is clear from the *Select Committee Report*, which outlines a number of recommendations for the improvement of design, only one of which was the establishment of a school.<sup>26</sup> Therefore contrary to the judgment that the aims opposed the contents of the inquiry, it would appear that from the outset the questioning would have had to be diverse. This conclusion thus leads one to consider why the inquiry’s aim was so broad and this problem can be tackled by placing the event within its historical context.

The breadth of the Committee’s subject matter is almost inevitable when one considers that what it was to design for industry had not been specifically identified in Parliament in any real form previous to the discussion, and therefore the debate was inevitably a conduit for the diverse associations of the concept ‘design’. A literary discourse on design had been emerging in Britain since the 1730s, but a hundred years later the term still maintained a range of interpretations and indicated a number of processes.<sup>27</sup> The Committee, being the first Governmental attempt to engage with general design for manufacture, therefore offers a fascinating glimpse into classification. Although examining this process is not straightforward within the proceedings as I shall discuss later,

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<sup>25</sup> This was similarly Romans (1999) assessment p. 206.

<sup>26</sup> The Report acknowledges that this is already being established (*SCR* p. v).

<sup>27</sup> Craske “Plan and Control...” 1999, p. 188.



to ignore the opportunity for studying the classification process ‘in action’ would be to miss out on an example of the evolution of Western thought, a change that Michel Foucault has identified as emerging from the Enlightenment.<sup>28</sup> Though beginning in the fifteenth-century, the same urge to classify and differentiate showed no sign of abating in the 1830s and indeed David Allen (1986) notes that the trend seemed to accelerate in the first four decades of the nineteenth-century in Britain.<sup>29</sup> In order to examine what may have been the Committee’s agenda therefore, the present thesis aims to explore the emergence of a classification of design for industry by acknowledging and identifying the different threads of design discourse that were discussed within the 1835-6 debate, and that tentatively emerged as design principles. In so doing many questions are raised. Where did the theories of design emerge from in the testimony and questioning of witnesses and members? Was this drawn solely from fine art theory and if not, from which other disciplines was design discourse adopted? Do the views offered in the Select Committee on design possess a logic that exposes the origins of these emerging theories? The conclusions to the many questions created by an examination of the diversity of debate and its origins require that the more specific context of the Committee be considered carefully, i.e. the political situation from which it emerged. This leads one to a crucial area where it is considered the key to the Committee agenda lies, that of Radicalism.

The chair of the Committee, William Ewart, was one of a growing pantheon of reform-minded Members of Parliament, whose collective Radicalism was influenced to varying degrees by the philosophies and friendship of Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and James Stuart Mill.<sup>30</sup> As proposer of the Committee, Ewart was able to secure the inclusion of many of his fellow reformers through

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<sup>28</sup> “Resemblance, which had for long been the fundamental category of knowledge – both the form and content of what we know – became disassociated in an analysis based on terms of identity and difference...The activity of the mind...no longer consist[ed] in *drawing things together*...but... in *discriminating*... (Svetlana Alpers describing Foucault’s theories in *The Art of Describing* 1983, p. 78).

<sup>29</sup> Allen considers that the increase in the establishment of scientific societies, most of them, more specialised than the broader ranging Royal Society is indicative of this increase. See for example, the Geological Society of London (1807), the Mineralogical Society (1799), the Entomological Club (1826), the Zoological Society (1826), the Astronomical Society (1820) (Allen *The Botanists* 1986, p. 5).



‘suscitation’ as S. E. Finer (1972) has defined it. This was one of a number of methods that the Benthamites had to employ, prevented as they were from more traditional action by their small numbers and the relative infancy of represented Radicalism.<sup>31</sup> For Finer, suscitation described the method by which the Benthamites would propose certain public inquiries. He explains:

[t]he trick was twofold; to get a friendly MP to move the Select Committee, success in which entitled him to nominate the majority of the fifteen members; and thereafter the careful pre-selection of witnesses. The advantages of this technique were that, if successful, the Benthamite view received an *official* status: furthermore, it enabled Benthamite officials to put their views publicly – as part of the minutes of evidence.<sup>32</sup>

The personnel on the Select Committee of 1835-6 contained many politicians sympathetic to the Radical cause who were the majority of members, particularly in the 1836 phase of the inquiry.<sup>33</sup> Of the ‘first’ and ‘second’ order Benthamites that Finer has pinpointed, fourteen members of the first Committee, and seven out of the thirteen members on the 1836 inquiry can be classed in this way.<sup>34</sup> With such a high proportion of Committee members supportive of, or at least sympathetic to the Benthamite cause, then it is extremely likely that the agenda of the 1835-6 Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures must in some way relate to these Radical policies.

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<sup>30</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P.* 1960 indicates that Ewart was influenced in several areas by Jeremy Bentham’s theories, particularly with respect to punishment and general reform (pp. 181-183).

<sup>31</sup> See the increase of Radical politicians in election results from 1800-1843 (Finer “The transmission of Benthamite ideas 1820-1850” in *Studies in the Growth of Nineteenth-Century Government* 1972, p. 18).

<sup>32</sup> S. E. Finer “The transmission of Benthamite ideas 1820-50” in *Studies in the Growth of Nineteenth-Century Government* 1972, p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> Perhaps the Radicals were not as successful as they should have been in securing the majority of members because the first session of the inquiry had an atypical number of members on it, numbering forty-nine. This large number may have been because “[t]he long-awaited event in the Commons had given time for all parties to gather their strength...” (Munford *William Ewart M. P.*... 1960, p. 79).

<sup>34</sup> These were John Bowring, Joseph Brotherton, William Ewart, George Grote, Joseph Hume, the Earl of Kerry, James Morrison, John Arthur Roebuck, John Russell, Joshua Scholefield, Thomas Spring-Rice, Edward Strutt, Charles Poulett Thomson and Henry Warburton (S. E. Finer “The transmission of Benthamite ideas 1820-50” in *Studies in the Growth of Nineteenth-Century Government* 1972, pp. 11-32; see also W. A. Munford *William Ewart MP*... 1973, p. 73).



Benthamism<sup>35</sup> or Philosophical Radicalism<sup>36</sup> was a branch of Utilitarianism that aimed to orchestrate the cultural institutions (centred mainly around the administration of law) of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century society so that they would work more efficiently to produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, which was the Utilitarian maxim.<sup>37</sup> In order to do this, society had to be considered in some way as a machine that could be constructed and tuned in order to run on the ‘natural’ laws of society; those laws were generally considered by the group to be economic.<sup>38</sup> As such, though Radicalism is often associated with reform and egalitarianism, the Benthamites were not particularly interested in abandoning the stratification of society but were concerned more with enhancing efficiency through the improvement of lower class conditions and education.<sup>39</sup> In order to achieve this, it was essential that the Benthamites should create a centralised point from which to consider and assess the effectiveness of the various mechanisms of society. Benthamite Radicalism is therefore typically characterised by the installation of this ‘vantage point’, and many of its favoured policies can be seen to promote both the centralising of power and the extension of that centralised authority into all aspects of society. An example of the range of policies that adopted this approach is the support of two apparently different actions - the Reform Act and the assessment of the Factory Inspections Act.

The Reform Act of 1832 supported Parliamentary representation for powerful towns and cities such as Birmingham and Leeds within Government. Simultaneously this created a more centralised governing system, while extending the influence of that very system into the more regional areas of the country. The Factory Regulations Act of 1833 was another mechanism through

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<sup>35</sup> This is a term used by Finer to refer to “...the views of Bentham and his circle of intimates” (Ibid., p.13).

<sup>36</sup> Grote *The Philosophical Radicals of 1832* 1866, p. 17.

<sup>37</sup> “The greatest happiness of the greatest number” was Bentham’s first choice of terms to explain his central principle. “Later, Bentham worried that this might imply, contrary to his intent, that the minority’s happiness is not to be considered at all, so he began to speak of “the greatest happiness of the community”, or simply of “the greatest happiness”. Later still, he added an explicit proviso: “in case of collision or contest, the happiness of each party being equal, prefer the happiness of the greater to that of the lesser number” (Pitkin “Slippery Bentham...” 1990, pp. 107-108).

<sup>38</sup> Egbert *Social Radicalism and the Arts* 1970, p. 384.

<sup>39</sup> Brundage *The Making of the New Poor Law* 1978, pp. 17-18.

which knowledge was centralised, giving inspectors powers to investigate “...the moral and physical condition” of the working populace.<sup>40</sup> Figure 0.1 overleaf is a table that was used by the inspectors to gain such information, and it formed part of a leaflet containing instructions for staff. Factory workers were asked intimate details regarding their own and their children’s health and social situation, and the inspectors were instructed to comment on external appearance, stature, food, clothing, cleanliness, health and sickness.<sup>41</sup> Thomas Jones Howell was a factory inspector who was a witness on the 1836 Select Committee and from his evidence it is apparent that as well as inspecting the working populace in relation to their health, he was also “...carefully” observing (as the wording in the instructions suggested<sup>42</sup>) the practice of design. Again this Act was indicative of the centralising tendency of Benthamite policy, and the use of this mechanism to provide information for the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures can perhaps be seen as an addition to these policies.

Figure 0.1 Table contained in *Instructions from the Central Board of Factory Commissioners* 24.04.1833.

In relation to these activities, the diversity of discussion contained in the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures begins to make more sense. Being predominantly steered by those sympathetic to Benthamism, the range of

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<sup>40</sup> *Instructions from the Central Board of Factory Commissioners* 1833, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.



mechanisms that were discussed as concerning the promotion of art and design knowledge, seems to be consistent with the Radical vision of an improved and orchestrated society. As Matthew Craske (1999) has suggested "...the study of English 'design' should be broadened to embrace wider cultural concerns with the related concepts of ordering, planning and scheming".<sup>43</sup> The Select Committee debates seem to fulfil this, being not simply about the need for improvement of design for manufactures, but also about the grander scheme of Benthamite societal design and the relation between the two. As Tevfik Balcioglu (1994) has noted "...what we understand by design has [a] different etymology and history in every country and even...in every design circle".<sup>44</sup> This Martin Rudwick (1985) has explained is the analysis of what forms a "...communal framework...of *tacit* knowledge".<sup>45</sup> The present thesis therefore aims not simply to outline the diversity of debate, but to consider it as the 'tacit' knowledge of the members and witnesses of the Select Committee, focusing on the understanding of the Radicals specifically. I will ask whether the Benthamites favoured a particular theory of design?

But before I begin this analysis, the discussion of Radical politics leads to another criticism that is often aimed at the Select Committee by those who have previously studied it. That is that the inquiry debates belie a hidden agenda that was not a genuine desire to improve design but was rather a campaign by both the Radicals and Benjamin Robert Haydon (one of the witnesses) to bring down the Royal Academy. This understanding of the Committee must first be addressed before any further study can begin.

The inquiry certainly included an investigation of the Royal Academy, and the reaction to this questioning seems to have been profound. Even as late as 1968 Sidney Hutchison showed that the institution seemed still to be smarting from the 1830s investigation. In his official *History of the Royal Academy* he claims that "[m]any of the questions and answers used in the attack [of the Royal Academy]

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>43</sup> Craske "Plan and Control..." 1999, p. 189.

<sup>44</sup> Balcioglu "On the transference of the term design..." 1994, p. 3 (This article was originally published in *Design, Industry and Turkey: International Product Design Symposium*, however I have referred to a copy sent by the author, and as such the page numbers are not the same).

were prejudiced and therefore of little value”.<sup>46</sup> In this way the inquiry into the constitution of the Academy and its role in British art and design interests has often been dismissed rather too easily.

The key to this dismissal is that many writers, again particularly those from design education history, have narrated the Select Committee through the ambitions and disappointments of the historical painter Benjamin Haydon. His objections to the Royal Academy and in particular its President at the time Sir Martin Archer Shee, are well documented and do indeed seem to have been personally motivated.<sup>47</sup> Several writers use Haydon as the tragi-comic protagonist in an unfolding drama of ridicule and revenge. For instance Bell, Edward Bird (1992) and Stuart MacDonald (1970) all begin their discussions of the Select Committee with a section on Haydon’s relationship to the Radicals.<sup>48</sup> The depiction of Haydon at the centre of early design education is also keenly displayed in Frayling’s history of the Royal College of Art.<sup>49</sup> He begins his discussion of the debates of 1835-6 with a quote from Haydon’s diaries, and frames the evolution of the Committee through the painter’s petitioning of ministers from 1832.<sup>50</sup> Frayling focuses on the inconsistency of the painter’s arguments, commenting that, after several attempts to gain the support of ministers, he “[f]inally... hit upon the one argument that seemed to get a reaction – that an education in “High Art” could improve the performance of manufacturing industry, increase wealth and refine the minds of a nation”.<sup>51</sup> Thus in Frayling’s analysis, the Committee is seen to be driven by the ambitions of one painter, a painter who has been characterised widely as “poor Haydon”, “[c]ontinually in debt, [and] bitterly affronted by the real or fancied slights of

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<sup>45</sup> Rudwick *The Great Devonian Controversy* 1985, p. 9.

<sup>46</sup> Hutchison *The History of the Royal Academy* 1968, p. 101.

<sup>47</sup> See Bell “Haydon versus Shee” 1959, pp. 347-358.

<sup>48</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1968 ‘Haydon and the Radicals’, pp. 38-50; Bird “The Development of Art and Design Education...” 1992, ‘Haydon the Man, his art and his influence on British art and design education’, pp. 68-86; MacDonald *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* 1970 ‘The Petitioner and the Politicians’, pp. 60-72.

<sup>49</sup> The 1837 Normal School of Design became the Royal College of Art.

<sup>50</sup> Haydon, in preparing to paint *The Reform Banquet at the Guildhall* made individual portraits of various ministers. This gave him opportunity to discuss his ideas (Bell “Haydon versus Shee” 1959, p. 347). See from 03.11.1832 in Haydon’s diaries (Haydon Vol. XIX, from p. 3).

<sup>51</sup> Frayling *The Royal College of Art* 1987, p. 13.



friends and patrons”.<sup>52</sup> As such, the basic motivation and credibility of the inquiry is brought into question, simultaneously throwing doubt on Haydon’s theories as well as the judgement of Ewart and the Radicals.

Though Ewart and Haydon did find each other’s arguments mutually beneficial,<sup>53</sup> it is an oversimplification of the situation and the personnel on the inquiry to base the assessment of the Committee on the painter’s personal dislike of Archer Shee. Haydon, though perhaps often self-pitying and sometimes deluded, was still capable of proposing some sound schemes for art education and patronage.<sup>54</sup> Likewise the arguments of the Benthamites cannot be simply put down to a desire to oust traditional values simply for the sake of it, but must be seen in the light of their more general policies for reshaping institutions in British society, in order that they should become more responsive to the workings of the economy. It is also rather presumptuous to consider that Haydon and a few Radicals lead by Ewart, were the only ones with any interest in the improvement of art and design.

When one considers the personnel of the Select Committee, the profiles of whom are contained in Appendix 1, it is clear that there were many dynamic politicians and theorists amongst the members and witnesses. Yet both design education and industrial design historians generally ignore this fascinating group of people. For example, although Frayling acknowledges that Haydon’s economic argument was probably derived from that put forward by Sir Robert Peel, he does not consider the possibility of Peel as another promoter of the art and design debate.<sup>55</sup> Similarly design historians also appear to rely on a chronology of a few larger-than-life characters, but do not consider the subtle interplay of a group of people in considering the issues of art and design promotion.<sup>56</sup> In Fiona MacCarthy’s *History of British Design 1830-1970* (1979) Henry Cole becomes the leading man, while the roles of Robert Peel and Joseph Hume as well as other

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<sup>52</sup> Bell “Haydon versus Shee” 1959, p. 347. See also Bird “The Development of Art and Design Education...” 1992, p. 70; Frayling *The Royal College of Art* 1987, p. 13; Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 43.

<sup>53</sup> Bell “Haydon versus Shee” 1959, p. 348; Munford *William Ewart M.P...* 1960, p. 78.

<sup>54</sup> Bell “Haydon versus Shee” 1959, p. 347.

<sup>55</sup> Frayling *The Royal College of Art* 1987, p. 13.

<sup>56</sup> Forty *Objects of Desire* 1995, p. 7.

manufacturers are played down.<sup>57</sup> There is no denying that Cole and Haydon were indeed influential, but the focus on these two characters does tend to discourage the study of other figures that may have also made great contributions, though with rather less theatricality.

Simply by reconsidering the years just before the Select Committee, it is clear that there were many other people working towards the promotion of art and design. Robert Peel, himself the grandson of a cotton manufacturer,<sup>58</sup> delivered a speech in Parliament in 1832 complaining that the design quality of British manufactures had been ignored in favour of invention in the more technical aspects of production.<sup>59</sup> This speech led to the 1832 Select Committee on the Silk Trade and it was the evidence of Dr. John Bowring (a ‘first order’ Benthamite and a member of both sessions of the 1835-6 inquiry) from that Committee that was passed around the members of the SDUK, in order to introduce the issues that were to be considered in their debate about a new School.<sup>60</sup> At that first meeting it was also noted that James Morrison the MP for Ipswich Borough (a ‘second order’ Benthamite) was keen to add to the money offered by Parliament for the establishment of the School.<sup>61</sup> Morrison then became a member of both the 1835 and 1836 sessions of the Select Committee, provided evidence to the same Committee in 1835 and was also on the School Council of the Normal School of Design. With such activity, this MP would appear to deserve at least some closer attention in any history of design education. Also among the members of that SDUK Committee were the Earl of Kerry and Martin Archer Shee (who were member and witness on the Select Committee of 1835 and 1836 respectively), as well as Henry Bellenden Ker and Charles Eastlake who were later on the Normal School of Design Council.<sup>62</sup> In a letter to John Lubbock (another member of the same SDUK Committee of 1834) Bellenden Ker noted that they both shared a vision for the proposed school,

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<sup>57</sup> MacCarthy *History of British Design 1830-1970* 1979, pp. 8-9.

<sup>58</sup> Baines *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* 1835, p. 160.

<sup>59</sup> Ausenda “Ceramics” in *The Age of the Industrial Revolution* 1990, p. 283.

<sup>60</sup> University College London SDUK Committee Minutes Book (2) 19<sup>th</sup> June 1834, pp. 290-291.

<sup>61</sup> Morrison was willing “...to subscribe £200 towards the outfit [of the School] and £100 a year, for 7 years, towards the maintenance of such a school” (Ibid., Small Minutes Book (7) 23 June 1834). British Library MS Add 31218 f. 59.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., University College London SDUK Small Minutes Book (7), 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1834, pp. 18-19; British Library MS Add 31218 f. 59.



believing that it should be a “...complete school of design for \_\_\_\_\_ drawing and to educate a class who are to become purposeful? pattern drawers and modellers”.<sup>63</sup> Such an acknowledgement of the amount of people with influence in the inquiry must undermine arguments that have dismissed the Committee on the grounds of Haydon’s personal motivation. Although it is impossible within the scope of the present thesis to do much more than indicate that there was a full range of personnel who had interests in the Committee,<sup>64</sup> the inquiry’s reprieve does offer an opportunity to reassess the theories on design favoured by the Benthamites in particular. Released from simply attacking the Royal Academy lead by Haydon, the complexity of the Radicals’ views on design itself can be considered more openly and that is what this thesis will undertake.

However, before this study is able to get underway, none of my critiques of previous scholarship put forward thus far have really tackled what is a very specific reason for the dismissal of the inquiry in design education history in particular. This is the overwhelming sense that the 1835-6 discussions were futile and lacked any important outcome. With this assessment of the debates, there does indeed seem little use in studying a Committee that made no impact on design education or theory; a debate whose main protagonist had killed himself by 1846. But again, such a view of the Committee is reliant on the assumption that Haydon was indeed the main motivation behind that debate, and further that the establishment of the Normal School of Design was the main purpose of the Select Committee. The former point has already been discussed, as well as the issue of the relationship between the School of Design and the Committee, but perhaps this latter point needs closer examination.

Again if one considers contemporary correspondence, it could be argued there is some evidence that the detachment of the Committee from the founding of the school did concern Ewart in particular. In a rather forlorn letter to Poulett Thomson the inquiry chairman writes on behalf of the “...artists and tradesmen” who assisted him in giving evidence, and he asks for information about the

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<sup>63</sup> Royal Society Lubbock Papers LUB K.18 22/23 June 1834. The gap and question marks is due to Bellenden Ker’s writing, which is almost illegible!

<sup>64</sup> Appendix 1 may perhaps provide a starting point for further study on this.

progress of the school.<sup>65</sup> Poulett Thomson, in his response to the letter, suggests that he and Ewart meet later in November (1837).<sup>66</sup> But if this meeting did take place, it appears not to have conjoined the two debates as Ewart's name is not on the Provisional School Council, although there are seven other members and two witnesses from the inquiry on the Board.<sup>67</sup> But if one considers that the Committee was not necessarily essential to the establishment of the School and vice versa, then one is free to really consider what may have been other outcomes of the inquiry.

One could suggest that by taking part in the debate, certain members and witnesses were encouraged to pursue some of its aims. For instance, a design School was established in 1838 by the Society for Promoting Practical Design.<sup>68</sup> This group was directly related to the 1835-6 Committee being founded by Joseph Hume (a member of the 1835 Committee and a 'first order' Benthamite), Philip Barnes (a witness on the 1835 session), Sir Thomas Wyse (a member of the Committee in both 1835 and 1836, also chairman of the Central Society of Education founded in 1836<sup>69</sup>), Haydon and Ewart (the President) themselves.<sup>70</sup> Although the school lasted for only four years, Bell claims that it had "...a considerable effect upon the policy of the Schools of Design".<sup>71</sup> However, art and design educational historians tend not to analyse this other school, or acknowledge it in any great depth.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> British Library MS Add 31218, f. 9.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., f. 10.

<sup>67</sup> These are Poulett Thomson (Reformer) who was on the 1835 Session, William Clay (Reformer) who was on the 1835 Session, Nicholas Ridley Colbourne who was on the 1835 Session, Benjamin Hawes (Reformer) who was also on the 1835 Session, Henry Thomas Hope (Conservative) who was on both the 1835 and 1836 Sessions, James Morrison (Reformer) who was on both sessions, Philip Pusey (Conservative) who was on the 1836 Session. Witnesses were Charles Robert Cockerell, a Royal Academician who gave evidence in both 1835 and 1836, as well as John Buonarotti Papworth who was a witness on the 1835 Session and briefly became the school superintendent.

<sup>68</sup> Anon. *The Spectator* Sept. 15 1838, p. 881.

<sup>69</sup> Ely *In Search of the Central Society of Education* 1982, p. 7.

<sup>70</sup> Op cit., and Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 74.

<sup>71</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 74.

<sup>72</sup> Bell (1963) discusses it but uses an alternative name for the society. He calls it the Society for the Promoting of the Arts of Design, but this differs from the two *Spectator* articles I found that mentioned the school. However, he has a list of the personnel on its Committee that I could not find, so this other source may indeed have an alternative name for the Society (p. 74). The



This was not the only educational establishment connected to members or witnesses on the Select Committee. For example the Spitalfields School for the teaching of weavers in that area, was another institution proposed by a witness on the 1835 session of the Select Committee, Thomas Field Gibson.<sup>73</sup> The board of the school also contained Robert Harrison and Thomas James, both of whom had been witnesses on the 1835 inquiry.<sup>74</sup> The Spitalfields institution was founded perhaps in response to the poor attendance of the silk designing class at Somerset House (the Normal School of Design), instruction that had begun in 1838 but was suspended by 1840.<sup>75</sup> This was no doubt only one of many examples of regional schools that were in some way connected to the 1835-6 debates through similarities in personnel, and an extensive analysis of this relationship would create a fruitful area for future research.

As the Select Committee was concerned with a number of methods for diffusing a knowledge of art and design, then links could also be considered in relation to exhibition venues.<sup>76</sup> One example of this connection is the project that involved the painter John Martin and John Landseer, both of whom were witnesses on the Select Committee; Martin in 1835 and 1836, Landseer in 1836. Both were among the council of an institution called the Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, which was founded in 1850 and situated in Leicester Square.<sup>77</sup> From the deed of settlement of that institution, it states that its founding was "...to exhibit and illustrate, in a popular form, discoveries of science and art, to extend the knowledge of useful and ingenious inventions, to promote and illustrate the application of science to the useful arts...".<sup>78</sup> As such there is a clear relationship between its establishment and the aims of the Select Committee in extending knowledge to the manufacturing population. Another important example is the

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establishment is also briefly discussed in MacDonald *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* 1970, p. 81, but he uses Bell as the source.

<sup>73</sup> Higgins "The Spitalfields Silk Industry..." 1989, p. 49; p. 132.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 128; p. 135.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 40; also see pp. 40-85 for details of the school. In 1842 it was one of the branch schools that was subsidised by Government (Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 101).

<sup>76</sup> A good text to begin with is Kusamitsu "Great Exhibitions before 1851" 1980, pp. 70-89.

<sup>77</sup> The building in Leicester Square was established in 1854. See Altick *The Shows of London* 1978, p. 491.

<sup>78</sup> *Royal Panopticon of Science and Art Deed of Settlement* 1850, pp. 6-7.

1851 Great Exhibition of the Arts of All Nations, this involved at least two members of the 1835 Committee, Sir John Peel and Lord John Russell.<sup>79</sup>

Publications were also influenced by the 1835-6 Select Committee debates, such as David Ramsey Hay's 1836 text *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring adapted to Interior Decorations, Manufactures and Other Useful Purposes*. This was the third edition of the book in which the author had expanded both the range of applications for his work, as well as the scientific discussion of colouring.<sup>80</sup> The new edition had been inspired in part by the published testimony of the 1835 session of the Select Committee where the author quotes the evidence of Samuel Smith, James Skene, James Crabb and Charles Toplis.<sup>81</sup> Hay had himself given evidence after the publication of this text, but other witnesses used their own testimony as a basis for later work, such as the engraver John Pye and the artist Richard Ramsey Reinagle.<sup>82</sup>

The Select Committee's activities also formed the basis of the next inquiry into the Schools of Design in 1849 and there was some crossover in personnel.<sup>83</sup> In effect one could argue that in the attempt of the later inquiry to galvanise and systematise emerging schools of design, it was carrying out one aspect of the aims of the first Committee of 1835-6, and maintained the centralising approach favoured by the Radicals. This is hardly surprising given that Henry Cole, the man who steered the 1849 Committee, had been closely connected to the Radical group who had attempted to orchestrate much of the first inquiry. As a younger man he attended daily 'classes' at the home of George Grote as well as evening lectures there.<sup>84</sup> Grote was another 'first order' Benthamite and also a member of

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<sup>79</sup> Bonython King Cole 1982, p. 37.

<sup>80</sup> Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, p. 3.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., pp. 53-55.

<sup>82</sup> For Pye: *Evidence relating to the art of Engraving, taken before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on Arts 1836. Reprinted together with the Petition of Engraver which led to that evidence being taken* London, 1836. Also *Patronage of British Art, an historical sketch: comprising an account of the rise and progress of Art and Artists in London*. London, 1845. For R. R. Reinagle: His evidence was reprinted in *Rudiments of Curvilinear Design* by George Phillips, 1839 (Brett "Drawing and the Ideology of Industrialization" in *Design History: An Anthology* 1995, p. 13, n. 36).

<sup>83</sup> Sir Robert Peel and Henry Thomas Hope for example (Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 84).

<sup>84</sup> Bonython King Cole 1982, p. 16.



the 1835 Select Committee.<sup>85</sup> Thus perhaps simultaneous to the evolution of Cole's understanding of politics, developed through his relationship to the Benthamites, his understanding of design and the mechanisms of its dissemination must have similarly been influenced through this relationship. An exploration of the Radical connection to the 1835-6 inquiry may therefore resonate with scholars who are concerned with Cole's early history and later interests.

There is one further and very important issue as regards the apparent fruitlessness of the Committee – this is that previous scholarship has not taken account the power and purpose of the ideal. As Ruth Eaton (2002) has demonstrated utopianism has been a persistent part of the practice of civic government for centuries.<sup>86</sup> As such, strategies for societal management have always demanded that the plan has been a mental, often utopian construct or debate pre-existing any material expression or activity.<sup>87</sup> This is the role that the Select Committee will be considered in. Throughout the inquiry proceedings, there were many ideas for new forms of management and curriculum in relation to the government of institutions relating to both design and more general social organisation. Furthermore outside of the debate itself, both members and witnesses invested much attention to establishing new forms of factories, galleries and schools. Indeed one could suggest that utopianism was at the very core of Philosophical Radicalism. Thus I suggest the 1835-6 inquiry should be considered as forming an essential stage in the development of governmental ideas as they materialised in the decades following the Select Committee.

Unpacking the mechanics of previous scholarship on the 1835-6 inquiry provides a strong case for studying the event but before outlining the particular approach that will be taken in this study, it is useful to briefly recap. The present thesis provides the first focussed analysis of the Select Committee where the proceedings form the main subject. This is appropriate for several reasons as I have noted, but mainly because the inquiry was the first to be concerned with

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Eaton *Ideal Cities* 2002, p. 11.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

exploring the management of design activity in Britain. As such it indicates a shift from a fragmented system of designing towards a more orchestrated and officially recognised process. The Committee is therefore understood in the present thesis to be a conduit of design theory and practice of previous centuries and, as shall become apparent, its proceedings feature many strands of discourse reflecting this diverse legacy. By concentrating on the shape of the Committee debate in isolation to later inquiries, it is possible to explore this diversity and to understand design practice and theory within a broader context of the history of ideas.

## **Methodology of the Thesis**

As has been noted, the scholarship surrounding the 1835-6 inquiry has generally been characterised by dismissal and fragmentation. With the exception of Mervyn Romans, design education historians have tended to understand the inquiry as the initial, but very faltering steps of design education in Britain. In relating the Select Committee to this outcome, their studies have considered the inquiry as a landmark event, but have not analysed the details of it in any depth (with the exception of the Royal Academy investigation). For cultural and design historians the Committee has been treated almost in the opposite way having been used as a resource, or as Bell would say a “veritable mine of information”.<sup>88</sup> Yet although this has acknowledged the finer details of the Committee, it has fragmented the evidence so that the Select Committee contents have been removed from the context of the debate itself. In response to this the present thesis considers the ‘event’ of the Select Committee as design education histories have framed the discussion. But unlike these studies it also aims to analyse the inquiry as a whole by considering the details contained within its proceedings, in a similar approach to design historians. One might suggest therefore that it is a narrow but deep study, in opposition to the broad and shallow analyses of previous scholars. This approach will, it is believed, allow the present study to draw out the tacit understanding of the concept of design amongst the Select Committee members and witnesses, resulting in a particular examination of design for the Philosophical Radicals. It is hoped that this will enable future



scholars to consider the Select Committee and its relationship to later developments in the Parliamentary management of design in an alternative light.

Yet as I noted earlier, to consider the inquiry in relation to its exploration of design theory is rather problematic. The letter from Bellenden Ker to Poulett Thomson that was quoted at the beginning of this introduction indicates that there was a sense in which 'Ewart's Committee', was considered to have posed rather undirected questions " ...without knowing how to use it [the information gained] or in many cases without knowing what to ask for".<sup>89</sup> As the relationship of this comment to modern scholars' opinion of the Committee has been questioned, then it is important to ask what reasons may have been more likely to cause these comments of Ker's. A possible answer to this again lies in the very aim of the Committee.

The inquiry proposed to discover the best means by which a knowledge of art and design could be extended to certain spheres of the public. As a consequence the Committee questioning concentrated on identifying the mechanisms and outcomes of design practice, such as museums, schools, publications, public monuments, architecture, objects and the effects of copyright on the development of their design. The concentration on these institutions effectively set the aims of the Committee within an urban context and it would seem, as identified in the title of the Select Committee, that the aspirations of the inquiry were to find ways in which the people of manufacturing regions could become more educated in design principles.<sup>90</sup> Thus the network of the urban population necessary to the production and consumption of goods was targeted - from the workers themselves,<sup>91</sup> to their managers<sup>92</sup> as well as the middle class buying public.<sup>93</sup> Yet although this aim would seem to be clear enough, perhaps where the confusion

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<sup>88</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 53.

<sup>89</sup> British Library MS Add 31218, f. 64.

<sup>90</sup> The Select Committee was '...to inquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the Arts and the Principle of Design among the People (especially the Manufacturing Population) of the Country...'.  
<sup>91</sup> There are many statements on this subject, see for example the evidence of James Morrison SC35 q. 170, pp. 13-14.

<sup>92</sup> See for example the evidence of Thomas Jones Howell who explained that the managers were sometimes not as keen as the workers for an education (SC36 q. 72, p. 11).

<sup>93</sup> For the general public consider Charles Harriot Smith's evidence SC35 q. 670, p. 46.

arose was in the fact that design as a general principle, particularly in relation to manufacture, had never been discussed in Parliament before and that there were still only hazy indications of what constituted design discourse particularly for men who were not designers themselves but who could be more suitably termed as gentlemanly amateurs.

As I noted earlier, Matthew Craske has suggested that design became a public matter of concern in the 1730s a trend evidenced by the “emergence of a literary discourse on design”.<sup>94</sup> Importantly as regards this study, Craske suggests that “discourse is more than a ‘context’...” and should be understood as a product that was consumed, as much as any other designed object.<sup>95</sup> In exploring the shaping of the Select Committee debate therefore, an examination of literature available to the gentleman from this eighteenth-century period up to the 1830s is essential to discovering how approaches to design practice and theory were indebted to this earlier period of the popularisation of design. To begin this process, the word ‘design’ itself was analysed within literature contemporary to the Committee, and when inspecting this range, it is clear that there would have been many definitions and uses of the term ‘design’ available during the 1835-6 period.<sup>96</sup>

‘Design’ was used to suggest fine art such as in R. Barton’s translation of Carlo Blasis’ *Code of Terpsichore: the art of dancing* (1830): “...from a few fragments of Greek paintings, and from the paintings of frescos at the Vatican, executed after the beautiful *designs* of Raphael”.<sup>97</sup> In this context ‘design’ may have referred either to the overall object such as the fresco, or to a sense of composition, as in Noah Webster’s *An American dictionary of the English Language etc. etc.* (1832) which noted that to “[e]xaggerate, in painting [is] to heighten in colour or *design*”.<sup>98</sup> These particular meanings of the word ‘design’ were similarly used in the Select Committee text. ‘Design’ indicating a piece of artwork was utilised by George J. Morant who noted that “[m]any of Raphael’s

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<sup>94</sup> Craske “Plan and Control...” 1999, p. 188.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> To initially discover these references the Oxford English Dictionary Online was particularly useful as was Literature Online.

<sup>97</sup> Blasis *Code of Terpsichore* 1830 (OED database).



*designs* will be found to be taken from the figures in antique gems”.<sup>99</sup> The word employed to suggest fine art composition can be seen in John Burnet’s evidence. He explained that he:

...saw at Munich a young man constructing a design in historical composition in the great room of the academy; there were perhaps seven or eight figures set up in groups with draperies, and arranged in this own manner; now there is no opportunity of doing that here, consequently it is carrying the art of *design* much further.<sup>100</sup>

‘Design’ in the 1830s, also suggested other forms of composition such as textile patterns as in G. R. Porter’s *A Treatise on the Origin, Progressive Improvement and Present State of the Silk Manufacture* (1831). In this text the author noted that the “...workman proceeds to read on the *design*”.<sup>101</sup> Similarly in the Select Committee text, Gustave Friedrick Waagen claimed that “[t]he greater and better part of them are not patterns introduced from foreign countries, but are original *designs* made at Berlin”.<sup>102</sup> However, alternatively ‘design’ also suggested something more than pattern, perhaps the general form of an object. Samuel Smith commented that “[t]he Scotch shawl trade has been very much injured by the introduction of French shawls... which I think is greatly owing to the superiority of the pattern and *design*”.<sup>103</sup> Certainly the term ‘design’ seemed to also signify an overall sense of an object’s composition, either as its form or pattern. James Crabb suggested that “...the *designer* must have carefully studied the aerial perspective of the colouring, as well as the general form and *design*...”.<sup>104</sup> The term was also used to describe philosophical composition, as in Edward Bulwer Lytton’s *Eugene Aram* (1832) where the character Aram explained that he “...cannot plagiarise, I assure you, from any scholastic *designs* you might have been giving vent to”.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Webster *Dictionary* 1832 (OED database).

<sup>99</sup> SC36 q.567, p. 48.

<sup>100</sup> SC36 q.935, p. 80.

<sup>101</sup> Porter *Silk Manufacture* 1830 (OED database).

<sup>102</sup> SC35 q.47, p. 3.

<sup>103</sup> SC35 q.292, p. 22.

<sup>104</sup> SC35 q. 989, p. 70.

<sup>105</sup> Lytton 1832, pp. 97-98 (OED database).

The term ‘design’ was also employed to describe an engraved image such as its usage in the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge’s *Penny Cyclopaedia* (1837) which noted that “[o]ne of the first books illustrated with *designs* on engraved plates was the production of Italian artists”.<sup>106</sup> John Martin in the Select Committee proceedings also used the term in this way to indicate compositions made by more mechanised processes such as engraving or printing, he explained that “...there is no protection for engravings or mechanical *designs*”.<sup>107</sup> The term is similarly employed to denote an architectural drawing such as J. C. Loudon’s *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* (1833) where figures are titled with “A *Design* for a Cottage Kitchen Grate...”.<sup>108</sup> This is similarly used in the Select Committee text. Sir John Dean Paul described how “...every architect touches up his architectural *design*”,<sup>109</sup> while in the final Report, we note that William Wilkins (the architect of the National Gallery) was forced to make “...an alteration in his original *design* which the Architect much deplores”.<sup>110</sup>

The use of the term to denote an architectural drawing suggests that ‘design’ indicated a plan to be carried out, and this is another definition of the word. A plan can be one such as a template as John Henning, in his Select Committee evidence, noted: “[o]n both friezes the *design* was drawn upon the stone and cut without the usual process of pointing”;<sup>111</sup> as well as meaning an architectural plan defining what is to be built, as we have seen. This sense of a ‘plan’ could also be understood as a template for weaving. John Howell explained that “...the *designer* gives us a small pattern, and the pattern-drawer, is the person who prepares the work; as an architect gives a drawing to the builder, so the *designer* to the pattern-drawer”.<sup>112</sup>

But ‘design’ could also suggest a plan existing solely in the mind, an instance even thought to occur in the practical design process, as Claude Guillotte noted when he explained that, in the weaving industry in Lyons, “...in a great number

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<sup>106</sup> *Penny Cyclopaedia* 1837 (OED database).

<sup>107</sup> SC36 q.867, p. 75.

<sup>108</sup> Loudon *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* 1833 (OED database).

<sup>109</sup> SC36 q.2098, p. 176.

<sup>110</sup> 1836 Report p. ix.

<sup>111</sup> SC35 q.850, p. 58.

<sup>112</sup> SC35 q.419, p. 31.



of instances, there is never a *design* drawn at all...”.<sup>113</sup> This was also suggested by James Crabb’s comment that “[t]he *design* is mine, but the paper itself is a French paper”.<sup>114</sup> More generally, ‘design’ as plan, referred to an intention or mental scheme, which could be held by an individual, or a group of people, even a nation. In C. Thirlwall’s *The History of Greece* (1838) we read that “[a] calamity befel them by which they were forced to renounce this *design*”.<sup>115</sup> While in Thomas Keightley’s *The History of England* (1839) we find that “[h]e could conceal his own *designs* and fathom those of others”.<sup>116</sup> Similarly in Charles Dicken’s explanation of his publication of *The Posthumous Paper of the Pickwick Club* (1837) he noted that:

[t]he publication of the book in monthly numbers, containing only thirty-two pages in each, rendered it an object of paramount importance that, while the different incidents were linked together by a chain of interest strong enough to prevent their appearing unconnected or impossible, the general *design* should be so simple as to sustain no injury from this detached and desultory form of publication...<sup>117</sup>

His characters also have the same capacity such as Miss Squeers (in *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, 1839) who “[i]n pursuance of this *design*... watched the opportunity...”.<sup>118</sup> In the Select Committee also, Charles Toplis utilised this definition of design when discussing education and its problems, noting that endowed schools “...had long since rendered the preferred boon of free education a mockery to that portion of society of which free education was ostensibly *designed*”.<sup>119</sup> Furthermore this sort of intentional planning as signified by the word ‘design’ was not only confined to humans but was also indicative of the activity of the deity. Thomas Chalmers’ *On the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God etc. etc.* (1833) explained that “[v]irtue was the *design* of our creation”.<sup>120</sup> Similarly the Reverend William Paley’s *Natural Theology* (1836)

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<sup>113</sup> SC35 q.824, p. 56.

<sup>114</sup> SC35 q.1046, p. 74.

<sup>115</sup> Thirlwall *History of Greece III* 1838 (OED database).

<sup>116</sup> Keightley *History of England* 1839 (OED database).

<sup>117</sup> Dickens 1837, p. vii (OED database).

<sup>118</sup> Dickens 1839, p. 77 (OED database).

<sup>119</sup> SC35 q.1553, p. 113.

<sup>120</sup> Chalmers *On the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God...* 1833 (OED database).

suggested that “Chance, i.e. the operation of causes without *design*, may produce a wen, a wart, a mole, a pimple, but never an eye”.<sup>121</sup>

Thus what we discover from this brief survey of literature from 1830-1839 in relation to the Select Committee proceedings is that during this period, the term ‘design’ was used to describe all areas of production from painting, sculpture, three-dimensional design and textiles, to engraving and architecture, as well as political or religious ideals, depending on context. As such the word exhibits an interesting quality that is, as the Oxford English Dictionary suggests, that it “...combines all these senses”.<sup>122</sup> Therefore it would seem that the term ‘design’ is rarely definitive because all its various meanings have either an analogical relationship to each other, or they are simultaneously imminent in the word. In a sense then one is forced to understand the definitions of this term as being structured like a stretched spring where at any one time, the translation of ‘design’ can be pinpointed, though always containing influences from its other applications. One imagines the coils to be separate, but still see that the shape makes a continuous wire that links and forms all the coils/definitions. Yet at other times, ‘design’ cannot be specifically defined and like a spring, tightly contracts so that if viewed from its end it is simply a circle. This is when ‘design’ means all of its definitions, and appears to be a term that infers a principle, encompassing ‘design’ as both verb and noun. This structure of ‘design’ as a term is highly significant to the formation of an agenda for the practice of design after the Select Committee, as we shall see.

It was the Reverend William Paley who debated the use of the word ‘principle’ in the context of the arguments for and against an understanding of God as the great designer. He claimed that this word was used too frequently in an attempt to disguise the complexity of natural processes, and as a way to avoid articulating exactly how the natural world had come into being, i.e. through the action of God or some other process.<sup>123</sup> In relation to the debate about divine design, Paley used examples of human production, suggesting that “[w]e might as well call the

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<sup>121</sup> Paley quoted in Gillespie “Divine Design...” 1990, p. 223.

<sup>122</sup> Under *design* v., OED Online, Oxford University Press, 2002.

<sup>123</sup> Op cit., pp. 220-221.



casting of metals a principle; we might, so far as appears to me, as well call spinning and weaving principles... these, as principles, pretend to dispense with intention, thought, contrivance, on the part of the artist...".<sup>124</sup> But as we can see from the main title given to the inquiry, the word 'principle' was used in conjunction to the concept of design, albeit design for manufactures.<sup>125</sup> In fact all the way through the proceedings, a definition of 'design' with the implication that it encompassed an archetypal set of principles, was used. James Morrison was asked "[d]o you think it would be a great importance to our manufactures to encourage a familiarity with *design* among the manufacturing population?".<sup>126</sup> Similarly a question put to John B. Papworth covered this sense of 'design', asking: "Do you consider that sufficient encouragement is given in this country to the art of general *design*?".<sup>127</sup> Of the uses of the word 'design' in both phases of the Committee, it is this generalised sense of the term (as verb/noun, or rather principle) that makes up the largest proportion of the definitions.<sup>128</sup> This usage occurs in three major contexts:

Firstly as a title for a school or academy of design, such as the Report's comment that "His Majesty's Government has this year, for the first time, proposed a vote in the Estimates for the establishment of a Normal School of *Design*".<sup>129</sup>

Secondly, there is the notion of 'design' as a principle that can or should be taught. George Rennie for example noted that "...it appears from the state of the knowledge of *design* generally throughout England, that there is an absolute necessity for some encouragement".<sup>130</sup> A question to James Skene explored the idea that "...an establishment of that kind you would not only make the fundamental principle (correctness in *design*) the object...?".<sup>131</sup> Similarly a question to William Wyon asked whether he thought it desirable in any

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<sup>124</sup> Paley quoted in *ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>125</sup> The main title being "...to inquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the Arts and the *Principle* of Design among the People (especially the Manufacturing Population) of the Country; also to inquire into the constitution, management and effects of Institutions connected with the Arts" (my italics).

<sup>126</sup> SC35 q.172, p. 14.

<sup>127</sup> SC35 q.1221, p. 89.

<sup>128</sup> Approximately 20%.

<sup>129</sup> Report 1836, p. v.

<sup>130</sup> SC35 q.957, p. 68.

<sup>131</sup> SC35 q.1130, p. 81.

comprehensive and general system of national education to make *design* to a certain extent a portion of the education of the people?”.<sup>132</sup>

Thirdly, this general principle was most often referred to as the ‘art of design’, such as in Henry Sass’ comment that “...persons are becoming so enlightened, and feel the necessity of learning the *art of design* as a language of itself, by which you really can convey your ideas without speech...”.<sup>133</sup> David R. Hay suggested that design may be improved in the workers “[i]f their attention to the *art of design*...were directed during the early period of their education...”.<sup>134</sup> James Morrison also noted that “I should say in this country more especially it seems an absolute necessity, because some branches of our manufacture really languish from the want of encouragement in the *art of design*. I should further say, that with respect to the *art of design*, there is no want of encouragement on the part of the public...”.<sup>135</sup>

Effectively therefore, what the Committee appeared to do was exactly what Paley had considered to be a preposterous notion, i.e. to imply that the processes of manufacture and design were somehow independent of the individuals that undertook them. So did the concept of a ‘principle’ of design in the inquiry effectively aim to “...dispense with intention, thought, contrivance, on the part of the artist...”, as Paley suggested?<sup>136</sup> The present thesis considers this idea by exploring whether the Select Committee proceedings evidence a detachment of the concept of design practice from the specialist knowledge of individuals who undertook that work. And if so, whether design practice was formulised into a set of ‘principles’, and why this notion of designing was appropriate to the Benthamite political agenda. By proposing to explore this, the thesis also sets design within a broader context in which design theory can be seen in relation to contemporary philosophical ideas, particularly in relation to science and politics.

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<sup>132</sup> SC35 q.1720, p. 130.

<sup>133</sup> SC36 q.217, p. 21.

<sup>134</sup> SC36 q.484, p. 42.

<sup>135</sup> SC35 q.172, p. 14.

<sup>136</sup> Paley quoted in Gillespie 1990, p. 221.



This extension of subjects relating to design is especially appropriate because the Philosophical Radicals were not particularly associated with an interest in design or the arts, although they strongly supported general education. For example, though Jeremy Bentham constructed an extensive and systematic curriculum in his model for a school for the children of the middle and upper class, he ignored the fine arts considering them as unnecessary to any ‘useful’ education.<sup>137</sup>

However his views were not necessarily supported by his friends or followers,<sup>138</sup> and design for manufactures was not simply associated with the arts. In letters between Bellenden Ker and John Lubbock, Ker mentions Lubbock’s opinion that the Government was attempting to encourage scientific education in desiring to establish a school for design.<sup>139</sup> Though Ker does not agree with this assessment, it is interesting to consider just how broad the subjects impinging on design for manufactures were for this group of politicians and scientists in the early nineteenth-century. Therefore, in searching for ‘principles’ within the Select Committee, it is appropriate that we should look for their precedence to more than theory from the arts.

However although the agenda for this thesis is now set, one is still left with some difficulty as regards method. As has been noted previously, the proceedings contain many uses of the term ‘design’ yet the employment of the word was centred mainly around the idea of a ‘principle’ of some sort. Thus to identify this principle requires more than the analysis of the immediate context of each occasion that witnesses or questioners used the label ‘design’. Rather it is proposed that the entire range of debate needs to be assessed in order to explore a Benthamite approach to design practice and theory. But in order to do this, it is necessary to reconstruct fragments hinted at throughout the questioning, where only at points are issues overtly detailed and debated. In some ways this demands that one read against the grain of the questioning and emphasise aspects of the debate which may not necessarily have been recognised as the main point by the witnesses or questioners themselves. As such the modern interpreter of these

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<sup>137</sup> This was his Chrestomathic Day School that he planned as being in Birdcage Walk near his home (Cumming *Useful Learning*... 1961, pp. 21-22; omission of fine arts p. 27. See also Hemingway “Genius, Gender and Progress...” 1992, p. 621.

<sup>138</sup> Cumming *Useful Learning*... 1961, p. 27.

<sup>139</sup> Royal Society Lubbock Papers LUB K.18, 22/23 June 1834.

Committee discussions is inevitably faced with one of the central questions of academic practice.

Charles Rosenberg has outlined the issues involved in this type of analysis in his editorial for *Isis* magazine (1988). In this particular discussion he concentrates on the history of science, but his debate is also applicable to the history of design theory. Rosenberg notes that for many historians of science the anthropological notions of the ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ are important considerations towards an understanding of the past. The ‘emic’ he explains as the view taken by historians who are attempting to portray “...a culture distant in time or space as it is perceived and experienced by its members”.<sup>140</sup> The ‘etic’ Rosenberg describes as the viewpoint from which a historian portrays “...a fundamental a higher, a realer reality, an organizing structure that transcends the reality perceived and negotiated by the subjects of one’s investigation”.<sup>141</sup> The subject of the present thesis can be considered as part of this debate between the ‘etic’ and ‘emic’ approaches. In reconstructing the threads of the design inquiry and in attempting to allocate certain sources for these strands, the subject of this study appears to be an ‘emic’ model, recreating the concept of design as the members and witnesses perceived it. Yet the interest in the Radical approach to design and its relationship to their concurrent philosophical ideas, also infers an interest in the ‘etic’ model. This is effectively the action of defining a framework beyond the Radicals’ own conscious consideration of design. Thus it is in the relationship between the emic and the etic approaches that the question of utopianism arises. How far did the Radicals really understand or formulate a strategic approach to the principles of design? Is what this thesis offers a reconstruction or really a hypothetical model that was never consciously understood or articulated by the Radicals themselves?

## Structure of the Thesis

In order to consider the tacit understanding of design contained within the 1835-6 Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures so as to highlight what may have

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<sup>140</sup> Rosenberg 1988, p. 566.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.



been the means and motive for a particular interpretation of design for the Radicals, the thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 1 presents the context of the Committee debates by providing a historical perspective of the relationship between social order, design and politics. This examines the legacy of changes in society that occurred during the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries in Britain, transformations that blurred the boundaries between certain forms of education and the relationship of these to social status and hierarchy. By examining some of the backgrounds and interests of the members and witnesses on the Select Committee of 1835-6, the chapter introduces the key issues of 'polite' and 'useful' knowledge. Exploring the changes within approach to subject matter particularly in relation to the Classical and Gothic, and the chapter goes on to demonstrate how traditionally 'polite' subjects were utilised for 'useful' ends, exploring the political significance of design styles. The section also highlights how the categories of 'polite' and 'useful' learning were at times reconstituted by the Radicals under the labels of 'amateur' and 'professional' in order to provide political ammunition. From here on the chapters begin to reflect the complex structure of 'design' with Chapters 2, 3 and 4 exploring the differentiated yet analogical concepts of design contained in the Select Committee, while Chapter 5 contracts the extruded form of 'design' and explores the qualities and associations between the different concepts of design in the 1835-6 inquiry.

Chapter 2 therefore briefly summarises the Select Committee proceedings themselves, by categorising the debates into the main areas of the discussion. This provides an outline of what were considered to constitute the mechanisms available for the diffusing of design knowledge, and these have been categorised into the following sections: the organisation of museum collections and their appropriateness as a tool for artistic and moral education, the need for schools of design and the current situation as regards provision, moving on to consider what an ideal design curriculum in schools should be, copyright and the possible methods of imposing it, and finally the importance of printed material in the diffusion of artistic knowledge. Chapter 3 begins to draw out the qualities of objects that were labelled superior design within the Select Committee discussions, again collating the fragmented information into a series of categories or principles that constitute the understanding of good design when it is gathered

together from the fragmented evidence. These cover a number of headings such as botanical accuracy and colouring, archaeological study and outline. The subject of this chapter is intimately connected with the following one in which the study of human anatomy is discussed. This was another and very important indicator of good design in the inquiry but its emphasis demands that it is discussed separately. Therefore Chapter 4 makes an in depth exploration of the portrayal of the human body. This is analysed in relation to two particular ideas – the relationship between the natural and the ideal and the concept of a superior artist as one who could imbue the work of art with power and energy. This idea is explored further in relation to the traditional understanding of an artist as a possessor of a quality beyond mere skill, the *ingenium*. The chapter moves on to consider how this apparently instinctive quality could be imbibed by an aspiring artist through the use of the Classical as a repository for ideal design. From here the language of the ideal is explored by considering the associations with geometry, and the figure of the artist is linked to Renaissance literature and the ‘god-making’ myths of Neoplatonic thought. This is the model of the artist as empowered and individually creative – very much in the model of Paley’s creative deity. Chapter 5 proposes that although the model of the artist as ‘god-maker’ was traditionally related to the study of the human body, that the Radicals favoured an alternative and new concept of design, this was one more usually connected with science or ‘useful’ knowledge and one in which the idea of a set of principles was central. In order to support this, the chapter examines the implications of the two models when placed within a factory system and aligns the model of ‘useful’ design to two events occurring in 1832, the passing of the Anatomy Act and the dissection of Jeremy Bentham. This section proposes that in both instances the sacred concept of the Neoplatonic body was transformed by the Benthamites. Thus to allow the study of the human form after these events was not to embrace the empowering Neoplatonic model of creativity drawn from traditional art theory, but rather signalled something quite different. This was the idea of the body as a model for teaching a student acceptance and self-discipline within an apparently pre-existent model of society; a method in which an individual enacted prescribed principles rather than authored them. This chapter therefore explores a crucial change in the concept of design practice, claiming that the movement towards a set of principles that lay outside the individual



creativity of the designer both suited a Benthamite agenda but also established the ideal of Modernist design practice. The thesis concludes by considering ways in which the arguments presented in the thesis could be extended and perhaps considered in relation to the emergence of later manifestations of design practice and theory.

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# Chapter 1

## Society, Politics, Style and Design: the context of the 1835-6 Select Committee

Harriot Grote's book *The Philosophical Radicals of 1832* identifies the years 1835 and 1836 as important for the Benthamites.<sup>1</sup> Radicalism, in opposition to a long standing two party system of Whigs and Tories in British politics,<sup>2</sup> had grown in influence after the election victories in 1832 when the Reform Act took effect, creating more representation in Parliament for towns that had previously been unrepresented.<sup>3</sup> This position had been galvanised by additional seats won in the winter election of 1834-5 adding numbers that contributed to the Radical successes of the following years. From 1833 to 1836 in particular, there had been the passage of many Benthamite-supported changes in domestic legislation, such as the Anatomy Act, the Poor Law Amendment Act and the Municipal Corporations Bill.<sup>4</sup> Though the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures, taking place during this momentous period of Radical achievement cannot be classed as providing such immediate policies or success, it is within this dynamic, though short-lived expansion<sup>5</sup> of Philosophical Radicalism that we must envisage the inquiry to have taken place.

Yet in order to provide a more profound context for the design debates contained within the proceedings of the Committee, it is important to consider many years before this dynamic time. Transformations in society and learning prior to the rise of the Philosophical Radicals in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries

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<sup>1</sup> Grote *The Philosophical Radicals of 1832* 1866, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Gilmartin *Print Politics* 1996, p. 13. Leslie Stephen (1900) comments that the debates between these two parties regarding the power of the crown had provided the ideological space for the Radicals to emerge (Leslie *The English Utilitarians* 1900, p. 12).

<sup>3</sup> However Munford suggests that in reality, the perception that the Reform Act of 1832 filled the house with more Radical middle-class Benthamites was not particularly the case in reality, as the elections of 1830 and 1831 had been more important in giving the Radicals representation (*William Ewart M. P.* 1960, p. 64).

<sup>4</sup> Op cit.

<sup>5</sup> Grote (1866) notes that Sir William Molesworth in October 1836 had begun to consider that the Radicals were not being bold enough and were losing their influence in the house (Ibid., pp. 24-25). William Thomas (1974) notes that the election results of 1837 had been discouraging to the Radicals and that "...in a few years, disillusioned with politics... they retired from parliament" ("The Philosophical Radicals" in *Pressure from Without* 1974, p. 52).

effectively shaped this group's emergence, and therefore these changes must be outlined.

## The Spiral of Success

The society of the 1830s was the result of a transformation in the perception of human social structure from the seventeenth-century onwards; a period in which a broader and less rigid understanding of social hierarchy had developed. Penelope Corfield (1987) attributes this more fluid concept of human society to the growth of modern science and particularly to developments in botanical investigation. This she believes is apparent through the growing popularity of the term 'class' to indicate one's social status, as opposed to the more traditionally used word 'rank'.<sup>6</sup> 'Class' derived from the term 'classification', was more effective in indicating that social strata were not fixed but had the ability to "...adapt, emulate, co-operate, compete, or conflict";<sup>7</sup> all qualities visible within the botanical world. The influence of the botanical metaphor is very apparent in Richard Burnet's 1826 vision of human society. He quotes the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus who had devised the first detailed system of botanical classification in his *Philosophia Botanica* of 1751.<sup>8</sup> Burnet utilised its general principle to explain how, though everything in the world could be differentiated from each another, all things were linked by the existence of the same criteria in each case.<sup>9</sup> This connection allowed for comparison, but also transformation and the merging of individual properties.<sup>10</sup>

Burnet applied the same idea to human society and envisaged it to have a dynamic structure that he described diagrammatically as the 'spiral of success' (Figure 1.1 overleaf). At the centre of the spiral was the highest level, that of the King. This was followed by Ministers of State, members of the Houses of Lords and Commons, heads

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<sup>6</sup> Corfield "From Rank to Class..." 1987, p. 38.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Rendle *The Classification of Flowering Plants* 1959, p. 7. Linnaeus is associated with the amateur botanist and Simon, Dormer & Hartshorne (*Lowson's Text Book of Botany* 1966) comments that the adoption of his artificial system was "...a marvellously convenient way of indexing a mass of new material which you do not really understand..." (p. 391) and perhaps the same could be said of Burnet's use of the Linnaean system as a metaphor? See also Fara "The Appliance of Science..." 1997, p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> For Linnaeus this was the artificial classification through the measurement of the stamens and carpels of each plant (Simon, Dormer & Hartshorne *Lowson's Text Book of Botany* 1966, p. 391).

<sup>10</sup> Burnet *A Word to the Members of the Mechanics' Institute* 1826, p. 53.



of professions, etc. etc. until the fifteenth sphere, which was the place of paupers in the workhouse. Burnet saw all these positions as arrived at through hard work (or lack of it) and believed that the diagram should be hung up in every institution that was designed for teaching the working class. This was in order to encourage the people to aspire to the next level of society.<sup>11</sup> As such the emphasis at least as Burnet saw it, was that the social system was to be negotiated by the individual who must aim to improve his/her own status.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 1.1 Richard Burnet's Spiral of Success from *A Word to the Members of Mechanics' Institutes* 1826.

The diagram therefore portrayed the whole of society as an interrelated dynamic and complex stratified system, in which each sphere worked upon the same guidelines, like a machine with one engine.<sup>13</sup> This mechanistic metaphor was also inferred by the author who noted that “[c]ountries, towns and villages partake of the movements, and the individuals, who are the component parts of them, are impelled by the same law”.<sup>14</sup> Though these organic and mechanistic references may seem at odds, this same metaphorical comparison had been established through the theory of natural theology,

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<sup>11</sup> Burnet *A Word to the Members of the Mechanics' Institute* 1826, p. 53.

<sup>12</sup> In language reminiscent of later writers who were social Darwinians, Burnet explains that this is the natural way of human development, claiming that the aborigines of countries recently discovered show us our ancestors (Ibid., p. 9).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

which though derived from the seventeenth-century, had re-emerged in Britain during the early nineteenth-century through William Paley's 1802 text *Natural Theology*.<sup>15</sup> Paley had drawn the older debate into the contemporary setting of the industrial revolution by comparing the workings of the natural world and the human body to the factory system.<sup>16</sup> For him as for Burnet both natural and human-made environments exhibited a dynamism that was beyond the scope of any one individual akin to both natural growth in the world and the complex mechanism of the factory.

But in Burnet's model the concept of growth or dynamism that it contained had not been created by God, as in Paley's theories, but was a seemingly unauthored energy. This he symbolised by the line of the spiral, which he interpreted as the scale of luxury or "...the comforts of life".<sup>17</sup> As such the author implied that it was an economic dynamism that provided both the yardstick by which modern society could be measured, as well as the principle through which it could advance. One country could never produce too much, wrote Burnet, because desire and wants would always soak up supply.<sup>18</sup> Rather in extending production, one simply improved the standard of living for all in every sphere. This was an important point.

No matter how much improvement went on, the writer noted:

...still the lowest description of labour will be required, and that men must be found to do it. But let them also be told the pleasing circumstance, that each has it in his own power... to lift himself a peg higher in society and procure a better station in life for his sons, by impressing upon their minds the necessity of steadily looking forward...<sup>19</sup>

Burnet's vision therefore considered society to be made up of a set of spheres all of which appeared to be necessary for its efficient working. The individual existed as an independent yet enmeshed entity within those mechanisms. This was a model that also echoed the Benthamite view of society, particularly after Jeremy Bentham's death in 1832. According to Donald Egbert (1970), the Benthamite vision was similarly mechanistic, combining faith in the natural laws of economy and the

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<sup>15</sup> Gillespie "Divine Design and the Industrial Revolution..." 1990, p. 215.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>17</sup> Burnet *A Word to the Members of the Mechanics' Institute* 1826, pp. 9-10.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 15-16.



division of labour, with a romantic "...individualistic liberalism" by which the individual could be seen to negotiate the static spheres.<sup>20</sup> Though these views must appear to the modern reader to be more closely attributed to the Conservative values of the past thirty years,<sup>21</sup> in the 1830s the Benthamites' policies challenged certain categories of understanding that appeared to threaten the Tory and some of the more conservative Whigs' sense of social order. This chapter will outline the borders of these battle lines, in order to provide a sense of how early nineteenth-century social perception dictated the scope of the Select Committee debates.

The complexity of mapping the fields by which the Benthamites may have appeared threatening is best introduced by utilising Burnet's spiral of success. Burnet's system captured the shifts and transformations of individuals symbolised by their economic identity within an early nineteenth-century society. This model showed how their class and status was at once static and definable yet also in a state of flux, always containing the potential for change. In the same way the attribution of certain types of 'polite' and 'useful' learning and knowledge which had previously identified status, were no longer clear cut and limited to a particular rank in society. Yet again akin to Burnet's combination of stasis and flux, at times these traditional links between status and certain types of knowledge were reconstructed, forming highly apparent and seemingly rigid bonds. It is this oscillation of knowledge in meanings and associations that provided the Benthamites with space to challenge existing social organisation and put forward other models.

## **'Polite' and 'Useful' Knowledge**

Traditionally 'polite' knowledge was an education for the gentry that embraced the skills needed to negotiate 'polite' society. These were conceived of as essentially humanist, which was "...an extension of the learning that was supposed to have been 'reborn' in the Renaissance".<sup>22</sup> An education of this type consisted of a classically biased diet of Latin and Greek literature, philosophy, music and a study of the fine

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<sup>20</sup> Egbert *Social Radicalism and the Arts* 1970, p. 384.

<sup>21</sup> Although Bentham and Robert Owen had been associated during an experiment with a new community of New Lanark, the 'socialist' which was a term Owen originated in 1827 was seen very much in opposition to the Benthamism of the 1830s (*Ibid.*, pp. 384-385).

<sup>22</sup> Burns "From 'Polite Learning' to 'Useful Knowledge'" 1986, p. 21.

arts of antiquity, up to the art of the sixteenth-century.<sup>23</sup> This brought out and trained a man (in particular) to be genteel, allowing him to fulfil his place within the sphere for which he was intended.<sup>24</sup> This sphere would have been conceived as a rank within the Great Chain of Being, an idea that linked but stratified all deities, humans and creatures, ranging from God, right through to the animal kingdom.<sup>25</sup> The ‘polite’ form of learning, though thought to equip the gentleman for life in this sphere, was also considered to indicate an inherent gentlemanly morality. As Lord Shaftesbury had noted in 1711, this link was demonstrated by the relationship between the words *virtuoso* (a person highly skilled in the fine arts particularly) and ‘virtue’ being derived from the same linguistic root.<sup>26</sup> Thus ‘polite’ learning was not merely designated for a particular sphere but was also a yardstick by which other behaviour was measured as right or wrong.

In opposition ‘useful’ knowledge was that associated with practical matters, a knowledge most identified as the sphere of the lower ranks. In Henry Peacham’s 1612 book *The Gentleman’s Exercise*, he commented that although defining a gentleman was not easy, it was clear that “[m]echanicall [sic.] Arts and Artists, whosoever labour for their livelihood and gaine [sic.], have no share at all in Nobility or Gentry...”.<sup>27</sup> This was an idea echoed by many writers who also considered that being a gentleman and of the highest ranks was the antithesis to manual labour, practical knowledge and work.<sup>28</sup>

But Kim Sloan (2000) describes how the easy opposition of ‘polite’ and ‘useful’ forms of learning disintegrated throughout the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries because of a general shift in “...emphasis from the Italian humanist interpretation of a gentleman as a courtier to the Protestant English ideal of public service, or the gentleman as ‘governor’, of use to society”.<sup>29</sup> Though previously associated with polite knowledge, she comments that the first real *virtuosi* in Britain such as John Evelyn and Prince Rupert, were in fact men who engaged with what had previously

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-23.

<sup>24</sup> Mingay *The Gentry* 1976, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Peacham *The Gentleman’s Exercise* 1634, p. 1, Corfield “From Rank to Class...” 1987, p. 37.

<sup>26</sup> Ford “The Grand Tour” 1981, p. 390.

<sup>27</sup> Peacham *The Gentleman’s Exercise* 1634, pp. 12-13.

<sup>28</sup> Op cit., pp. 6-7.

<sup>29</sup> Sloan ‘*A Noble Art*’ 2000, p. 11.



been considered as useful knowledge unfit for gentlemen.<sup>30</sup> They had followed the theories of Francis Bacon and his contemporaries,<sup>31</sup> and this group advocated action that was based on natural philosophy (science).<sup>32</sup> For Bacon science and experiment must also include the crafts and industries, where work over centuries had revealed much of the construction of the world providing an important resource that had been ignored through the traditional prejudice of theoreticians.<sup>33</sup> For the philosopher the goal of the advancement of humankind was impossible if a gentleman did not physically engage in the world, but remained isolated from it through the book-led humanist learning of a traditional polite education. But he did not favour the abandonment of theory but rather urged the combination of it with practice. Bacon asserted that “[n]either the Hand alone, nor an understanding left to itself, can do much”.<sup>34</sup> This combined investigation he saw as the only method by which humankind could manage and advance its own society, a duty he felt humanity owed to God.<sup>35</sup> In conversations with Dr. John Bowring, Jeremy Bentham had declared his admiration for Francis Bacon’s theories because of this very relationship between theory and practice. Bentham considered him to be the “...first philosopher who had laid down the principle that all theories should be subjected to and tested by the crucible of experiment”.<sup>36</sup> The legacy of Baconian knowledge was therefore that “...nothing is to be counted a Matter of true Learning amongst men, which is not directly serviceable unto Mankind...”.<sup>37</sup> The philosopher concluded that:

...the greatest Error of all, is, mistaking the ultimate End of knowledge; for some Men covet knowledge, out of a natural Curiosity, and inquisitive Temper; some to entertain the Mind with Variety and Delight; some for Ornament and Reputation; some for Victory and Contention; many for Lucre and a Livelihood; but few for employing the Divine Gift of Reason, to the use and benefit of Mankind.<sup>38</sup>

Bacon’s theories were championed for centuries enjoying a resurgence in the 1830s,<sup>39</sup> but throughout the intervening time their application underwent numerous changes.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>31</sup> Debus *Science and Education in the Seventeenth-Century* 1970, pp. 10-11.

<sup>32</sup> Bacon *The Novum Organum* 1676, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> Rossi *Philosophy, Technology, and the Arts...* 1970, p. 158; Farrington *Francis Bacon* 1973, p. 143.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> Rossi *Philosophy, Technology, and the Arts...* 1970, p. 65, p. 80.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 337.

<sup>37</sup> Dury *The Reformed School* 1649, pp. 40-41.

<sup>38</sup> Bacon *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon* 1733, p. 31 no. 48.

<sup>39</sup> Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1982, p. 267.

Perhaps the most profound and decisive of these transformations was the interpretation and adoption of his work in the later part of the seventeenth-century. Walter Houghton (1957) has explained how amongst the followers of Bacon, there was a gradual shift "...from philosophy to practice, with special reference to the practice of the trades".<sup>40</sup> Though always a part of Bacon's scheme an emphasis on "...immediate and commercial success" was in opposition to the high idealism of the philosopher's original scientific scheme.<sup>41</sup>

As has been noted this new mercantile model for a gentleman's learning did not completely replace the more traditional and genteel knowledge usually associated with a gentleman's education. Rather the two ideals of 'polite' and 'useful' knowledge persisted and as in Burnet's societal model, merged and opposed each other depending on circumstance. The opposition of the ideals of polite and useful knowledge appeared to often be re-established when there was a desire to define what the proper activities and education of others should be, or when matters of finance or business were encountered.<sup>42</sup> Throughout the centuries following Bacon's writing and up to the 1830s at least, the debate still remained as to whether the acquisition of a particular type of knowledge would upset the established hierarchy either by lowering the standards of the upper class through too much emphasis on practical knowledge, or promoting the interests of the lower class, by supplying them with theory beyond their defined spheres. The Radicals were particularly associated with this debate because, not only did they advocate the education of the lower class<sup>43</sup> but their own origins often displayed the legacy of the changes in society that had occurred since the seventeenth-century. This was the growth of a middle-class that had gained wealth through 'useful' business acumen and had galvanised their status by the adoption of particular aspects of a 'polite' education. This chapter will demonstrate the phenomena discussed above by describing the typical areas that a gentleman would

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<sup>40</sup> Houghton "The History of Trades" in *Roots of Scientific Thought* 1957, p. 361.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> See for example the problems even for Royalty who were involved in scientific projects such as the New River Project of London in 1611. To be involved in a 'project' dealt a double blow to a gentleman. Not only did the science demand lowly practical knowledge, but also the very term was associated with con men and a lack of financial integrity, qualities deemed inappropriate for the status of a gentleman (Keller "The Age of the Projectors" 1966, pp. 467-472).

<sup>43</sup> See John Arthur Roebuck's *On the Means of Conveying Information to the people...* 1835 for example.



have engaged in during the 1830s; information gleaned through a consideration of the Select Committee members and witnesses.

## Useful Knowledge and the Members of the Select Committee

Many of the members of the Select Committee were connected with manufacture and trade, and this section of the chapter offers a more detailed description of two of these members while briefly mentioning others. Its aim being to give an indication as to the general relationship between some of the members on the Committee and the legacy of both societal advancement and forms of learning associated with Baconian ‘useful’ knowledge.

Edward Baines, though not a Radical Benthamite, was certainly a reformer<sup>44</sup> and both he and his son (also Edward Baines) provide an interesting example of the type of members that were part of the Committee debates. Baines Senior had been editor of the *Leeds Mercury* through which he campaigned for many years against slavery and for parliamentary reform, free trade and popular education in particular.<sup>45</sup> Baines was MP for Leeds at the time of the Committee, attending the 1835 session. In the same year his son published a book on the history of cotton manufacture<sup>46</sup> in which Baines Junior outlined the purpose of writing his text in the book’s preface. He explained that:

[t]he history of civilization consists greatly in the history of the USEFUL ARTS. These arts form the basis of social improvement. By their means men are raised above abject want, become possessed of comforts and luxuries, and acquire the leisure necessary to cultivate the higher departments of knowledge. There is also an intimate connexion between the arts and natural science. Mutually aiding each other, they go hand in hand in the course of improvement. The manufactory, the laboratory, and the study of the natural philosopher, are in close practical conjunction. Without the aid of science, the arts would be contemptible: without practical application, science would consist only of barren theories, which men would have no motive to pursue.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Baines *The Life of Edward Baines* 1851, pp. 88-89 and pp. 147-176.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 46-54.

<sup>46</sup> *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain*. London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher & P. Jackson (1835).

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

In this way, Baines aligned his own work to the combining of practical and theoretical knowledge as a method for the improvement of society in the way that had been proposed by Bacon himself in the seventeenth-century, and in a sense the preface to the book can be seen as representing the general philosophy of the Baines family. They had adopted the motto, 'knowledge is strength'<sup>48</sup> echoing Bacon's 'knowledge is power', a phrase that was to symbolise many forms of education aimed at the working class, such as that provided by Mechanics' Institutes in the early nineteenth-century.<sup>49</sup> This was only one area in which Bacon was influential in that period.<sup>50</sup>

The attraction to the legacy created by the embracing of useful knowledge is hardly surprising when one considers the background of Edward Baines Senior who, perhaps beyond all others within the Committee personnel, personified Burnet's spiral of success.<sup>51</sup> As a young man Baines had struggled to find work, and early on in his life (with "...all his sins and all his 'wardrobe' on him", as Richard Oastler described the event) travelled from Preston to Leeds in search of employment. From this humble beginning and within forty years, as Derek Fraser (1974) notes, Baines was a Member of Parliament for Leeds as well as the proprietor and editor of a large newspaper.<sup>52</sup> This phenomenal rise in social status was described in the biography of Mr. Baines (Senior) that was written by his son Edward, and published in 1851. The story of his father's early struggles was seen as the personification of "...social amelioration and individual self help".<sup>53</sup> Considered to be an inspiration for the middle class, the book read almost like a parable teaching how the hard-working, virtuous life could provide social rewards.<sup>54</sup>

Edward Baines was not the only member of the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures to symbolise the model of the self-made gentleman who had evolved

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 185-186.

<sup>49</sup> Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 242.

<sup>50</sup> Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1982, p. 267.

<sup>51</sup> Outside the Committee personnel are other MPs such as Francis Place who was a master tailor and owned a shop in Charing Cross (Halévy *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism* 1928, p. 201).

<sup>52</sup> Fraser "Edward Baines" in *Pressure from Without* 1974 p. 184. He gave up his editorship in 1834 when he became MP but his son took over and the paper was very much still in the family (Ibid., p. 183).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 184.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.



through a practical education.<sup>55</sup> A particularly good example of a family that advanced in society through the same mixture of business enterprise and scientific endeavour was the Strutt family.<sup>56</sup> Jedediah Strutt, had begun his textile business around 1756,<sup>57</sup> and his grandson Edward was a 'first order' Benthamite and a member of both the 1835 and 1836 sessions of the Select Committee.

The original business had been started by technical innovation when Jedediah Strutt had invented an attachment that updated and improved upon an existing machine for mechanical knitting.<sup>58</sup> The limitations of this original mechanism had been shown to him by his brother-in-law William Woollet of Derby,<sup>59</sup> and after Strutt invented the new attachment, he left farming to go into partnership with Woollett. Their Derby rib stocking frame allowed them to knit ribbed hosiery and two years later they were showing these resulting products in London.<sup>60</sup> Strutt further extended the partnership to the Nottingham hosier Samuel Need in 1758, eventually joining forces with Richard Arkwright in 1769.<sup>61</sup> Through these growing business partnerships built on Strutt's initial connections made through marriage, there emerged a developing network of new mills in Belper, Milford, Cromford and Derby, especially designed for their improved machinery, which also included the Arkwright water-powered spinning jenny.<sup>62</sup> Each mill provided new possibilities for the division of labour and the specialisation of production, in order to enhance output.<sup>63</sup>

The development of the Strutts' firm expanded beyond this when Jedediah's three sons, William, George and Joseph took over the business on their father's death in 1797.<sup>64</sup> It is particularly interesting to look at the work of William Strutt in relation to the future of the business. This is firstly because he made radical improvements to the building of mills and in so doing is believed to have contributed to the future of

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<sup>55</sup> Baines had initially trained as a weaver but was determined to take up printing (Baines *The Life of Edward Baines* 1851, p. 18).

<sup>56</sup> For an interesting discussion of the importance of family in Bacon's model of scientific endeavour see A. Wallace's *The Social Context of Innovation* 1982.

<sup>57</sup> Fitton & Wadsworth *The Strutts and the Arkwrights* 1964, pp. 24-25.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 24-25.

<sup>59</sup> English *The Textile Industry* 1969, p. 42.

<sup>60</sup> Op cit., p. 33.

<sup>61</sup> Baines *History of Cotton Manufacture* 1835, pp. 150-151.

<sup>62</sup> See Ibid. regarding the history of the spinning jenny invention (pp. 151-158), and Ibid on the patent for Strutt's stocking frame (p. 39-46).

<sup>63</sup> For example the silk mill in Derby (Ibid., pp. 47-50).

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

modern architecture, thus carrying on the pioneering spirit of his father.<sup>65</sup> William was also Edward's father and his son, in becoming an MP in Parliament, effectively extended the philosophy of the Strutt family beyond regional influence and into national government.<sup>66</sup>

Like Jedediah, William Strutt continued the tradition of innovation based on useful knowledge particularly in relation to mill buildings. His most radical idea was to change the usually rectangular shape of a mill, constructing a round building at Belper (1803-13) for the process of scutching, which was a particularly high fire-risk activity.<sup>67</sup> Figure 1.2 illustrates the mill, which was a three-storey building with a

Figure 1.2 The Strutt Round Mill at Belper 1803-13

central helical staircase with viewing slits through which the workers could be observed as an added precaution in the fight against fire. On the top floor was a round chamber that could be slowly revolved to allow inspection.<sup>68</sup>

The Bentham's were friends of the Strutts, and the mill is thought to have been inspired by the idea of the Benthamite Panopticon that was a model for a round multipurpose building.<sup>69</sup> The Panopticon was designed by Samuel Bentham and

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>66</sup> Edward went to Manchester College in York and then to Trinity College, Cambridge (ibid., p. 171).

<sup>67</sup> Scutching is one of the processes that 'opens' up the cotton fibres so that they can be spun (see English *The Textile Industry* 1969 on Arkwright's machines for scotching, pp. 62-64).

<sup>68</sup> This could either be powered by a vane on the roof if there was enough wind or could be hand cranked (Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 125).

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.



elaborated on by his brother Jeremy, who believed that the simple idea of observation from a central point was a powerful solution to many areas of modern societal management (see Figure 1.3).<sup>70</sup> For Bentham and the Benthamites the idea of the centralising of authority was a profound part of their philosophy, and thus it seems that William's mill was of great importance, not simply in the advancement of textile production, but also in its utility of new models of societal management (if on a reduced scale). Bentham had campaigned in France and Britain to get the actual design for his Panopticon produced as a prison, but he was unsuccessful in both countries.<sup>71</sup> However as with Strutt's mill and throughout the 1820s and '30s, there were many plans for buildings, some of which were built and some only documented, that were reminiscent though never fully achieved the mechanics of this highly potent political idea.<sup>72</sup>

Figure 1.3 Panopticon by Samuel and Jeremy Bentham, 1787.

In addition to his own family's business, William Strutt was instrumental in founding and supporting many institutions in Derby. For example in 1781, he and Erasmus Darwin established the Derby Philosophical Society,<sup>73</sup> William also supported groups that he did not initiate himself such as the working class Derby Friendly Society and the Savings Bank.<sup>74</sup> In addition William's brother Joseph and Edward (William's son)

<sup>70</sup> "Morals reformed – health preserved – industry invigorated – instruction diffused – public burthens lightened – Economy seated, as it were, upon the rock – the Gordian knot of the Poor-Laws are not cut, but untied – all by a simple idea in Architecture!" (Bentham *The Panopticon Papers* 1995, p. 31).

<sup>71</sup> Halévy *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism* 1928, p. 173, p. 178.

<sup>72</sup> Though as Thomas Markus (1993) suggests these were never really Panopticons as they lacked "...the total asymmetry of power which was an essential feature" (p. 123).

<sup>73</sup> Fitton & Wadsworth *The Strutts and the Arkwrights* 1964, p. 175.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

founded the Derby Mechanics' Institute in 1825, continuing the Strutt family work.<sup>75</sup> They, like Baines who established and supported the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, and Mechanics' Institute,<sup>76</sup> understood that improvements in one's society were only successful if they could also initiate further improvement. They therefore provided, like the spiral of success, a perpetual process by which populations could advance through the acquisition of useful knowledge.

Though the two examples I have given are members of the Select Committee who had personally or in their recent past advanced in the way outlined by Burnet's spiral of success, the attraction to the political effectiveness of useful knowledge was not limited to those who had come from more lowly beginnings. John Bowring and William Ewart, both key members of the Select Committee and champions of this type of education, came from relatively well-established families, Ewart's being more elevated than Bowring's.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, Jeremy Bentham who was central to anchoring the ideas of the Philosophical Radicals was himself a great supporter of useful knowledge yet his extensive output and influence on the subject was dependent on the financial freedom he possessed.<sup>78</sup> Another member of the 1835 Select Committee who is indicative of the legacy of useful knowledge was Edward Lytton Bulwer.<sup>79</sup> His upbringing should have perhaps made him more naturally disposed to following Tory policy,<sup>80</sup> but he had undertaken a trip around Britain before travelling into France on his Continental Grand Tour.<sup>81</sup> Unusually, Bulwer had travelled incognito and in so doing was able to mingle with the poor without them being aware that he was a gentleman. This allowed him to observe the conditions in which they lived at first hand and it changed his political views profoundly,<sup>82</sup> as well as perhaps

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Baines *The Life of Edward Baines* 1851, pp. 128-129.

<sup>77</sup> Bowring was a member of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, while William Ewart was to champion and gain the opening of free libraries in Britain. On William Ewart's family see G. W. Shirley *William Ewart* 1930, pp. 2-3 and Munford *William Ewart M.P.* 1960, pp. 17-21 and on John Bowring's family see Bowring *Autobiographical Recollections* 1877, pp. 3-4.

<sup>78</sup> For details on Bentham's merchantile background see Bowring *Memoirs of Jeremy Bentham* 1843, pp. 1-7.

<sup>79</sup> He had a habit of changing his name but during the Select Committee period, he called himself Bulwer (Snyder *Liberty and Morality* 1995, pp. 3-4).

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>81</sup> Snyder *Liberty and Morality* 1995, pp. 12-13.

<sup>82</sup> This tour may have been why Bulwer was concerned with the destruction of social values through the loss of sympathy (Lane "Bulwer's Misanthropes..." 2002, p. 597).



aiding his work as a novelist.<sup>83</sup> These few examples of members on the Select Committee provide a cross-section of the inquiry personnel's backgrounds, and indicate the legacy of useful knowledge throughout all spheres.

In a similar, but perhaps more famous tour than Bulwer Lytton's, had also been undertaken by William Cobbett, another Radical MP (though often at odds with Bentham<sup>84</sup>) and journalist. He had travelled through Britain to study and experience all aspects of rural society and saw a country in which not only the natural, but the cultural landscape was being altered by industry.<sup>85</sup> Cobbett expressed these views in his book *Rural Rides* (1830), in which he seamlessly combined the observation of the natural world with a study of the conditions in which the people lived.<sup>86</sup>

The examples of Bulwer and Cobbett's tours introduce the way in which the subjects of a traditionally polite education were transformed under the idea that learning should be useful. In his case, he challenged the traditional picturesque tour, which was more often an exercise in visiting and seeing sites of natural and archaeological beauty, into an investigation of social conditions.<sup>87</sup> and the following section further explores both the existence of traditional roles of polite education, and their application towards useful ends in the early nineteenth-century. This discussion will begin by examining the centrality of the Classical in traditional polite learning, particularly in relation to the Grand Tour. The discussion moves on to demonstrate how the vocabulary of Classical style as well as Classical literature was utilised by the Radicals to provide support for their political and economic views. This section continues to consider the emergence of the popularity of the Gothic style and explores the overt clash between polite and useful agendas within discussion surrounding both the building of the Houses of Parliament and the National Gallery. In these

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<sup>83</sup> Bulwer was another follower of Bentham though he cannot be classed as a 'first order' Benthamite (Ibid., p. 14).

<sup>84</sup> Nattrass *William Cobbett* 1995, p. 27.

<sup>85</sup> Derry *Cobbett's England* 1997, p. 19.

<sup>86</sup> See for example his trip from Malmsbury to Gloucestershire, Hereford and Worcestershire where he begins by describing the goldfinches and moves on to discuss the reasons why a poor man steals cabbages (Cobbett *Rural Rides* 1953, pp. 100-119).

<sup>87</sup> The picturesque or romantic tour often considered the landscape ideally as devoid of people or included people who had specific roles such as the farmer or the hermit (Andrews *The Search for the Picturesque* 1989, p. 9).

interchanges the ‘polite’ and ‘useful’ were called upon by the Radicals, and transformed into the categories of the ‘amateur’ and ‘professional’.

## The Classical and the Grand Tour in ‘Polite’ Education

A grand tour was one of the key components of a polite education. It usually consisted of “...a movement from the cold North of Europe towards the warm South (and back again), a desire or intention to visit Rome, and some sort of commitment to appropriating the foreign as a source of both pleasure and ‘improvements’”.<sup>88</sup> The actual experience of visiting and studying sites on the Continent galvanised the polite education in several ways. Firstly, for the traveller, the time away from one’s immediate family and environment allowed a period of comparative social and sexual freedom, though many were advised against and rescued from exploring this aspect of the Tour too liberally.<sup>89</sup> After his university education,<sup>90</sup> Edward Strutt was warned about this aspect of a Continental tour by his father. William wrote to him explaining that he “...did not like... Joseph’s [Edward’s uncle] plan of taking a long journey in foreign countries especially with Women. So many things may occur which may be painful or even fatal at such a distance from England”.<sup>91</sup>

Secondly and perhaps most importantly, the Grand Tour gave life to the texts and images that a pupil would have only previously encountered in books. As such, it allowed a visitor to experience the actual geographic settings of some of the great epics, like the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*.<sup>92</sup> Charles Robert Cockerell, a witness on the Select Committee both in the 1835 and 1836 sessions and who was also on the Government’s Normal School of Design Council, is reported to have responded to the particular power of place on his tour. His son retells the story of his father having taken off all his clothes on seeing the tomb of Patroclus “...and, in imitation of

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<sup>88</sup> Chard “Grand and Ghostly Tours...” 1997, p. 101. See also De Seta “Grand Tour...” in *Grand Tour* 1996, pp. 14-15.

<sup>89</sup> Chard “Grand and Ghostly Tours...” 1997, p. 101; Connor “The fruits of a Grand Tour...” 1998, p. 24.

<sup>90</sup> Edward went to Trinity College, Cambridge (Fitton & Wadsworth *The Strutts and the Arkwrights* 1964, p. 171).

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>92</sup> De Seta “Grand Tour...” in *Grand Tour* 1996, p. 15.



Achilles, ran three times around it, naked”.<sup>93</sup> However, sometimes the real locale did not always live up to the excitement of the myth. We are told that William Ewart, on his tour of Sicily, was so “...unimpressed by much of the scenery through which they were passing and tried to spend some of his time on mule-back re-reading his classics through green spectacles”.<sup>94</sup> Both these men, though travelling early in the nineteenth-century, were still taking a far more established experience than those who had undertaken the tour in the eighteenth-century. As Cesare de Seta (1996) notes, this allowed more freedom to become ‘self-absorbed’, and to seek one’s own identity, rather than necessarily to analyse and record the experience more scientifically.<sup>95</sup> However this self-discovery was not wholly incompatible with a more empirical approach.

If the student was truly dedicated, travel even in the early nineteenth-century certainly still allowed an opportunity to marvel at the ancient works of art and architecture, but also to study them and perhaps to dispute or clarify previous scholarship. It also provided the chance for a gentleman (or gentlewoman) to publish the results of his/her own experiences.<sup>96</sup> Not only was this period of travel personally character-building then, but it also offered the opportunity for establishing one’s own reputation as genteel and suitably knowledgeable to move in polite British society. It is interesting to consider the Grand Tour of Charles Robert Cockerell more particularly in this respect. After he had travelled to the West Country and Wales, then spent a year in the architectural office of Robert Smirke, he embarked on a Continental tour that eventually took him seven and a quarter years to complete.<sup>97</sup> Cockerell, through the wishes of his father and his own ambitions, embarked on his journey specifically to reassess the actual architecture of Greece and Rome in relation to the principles that Vitruvius had laid down in his treatise on architecture.<sup>98</sup>

Even on a domestic tour, the influence of the Classical was still very important. As Malcolm Andrews (1989) notes, there was a complex relationship between the

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<sup>93</sup> Cockerell *Travels in Southern Europe and the Levant* 1903, p. 40.

<sup>94</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P...* 1960, p. 33.

<sup>95</sup> De Seta “Grand Tour” in *Grand Tour* 1996, p. 18.

<sup>96</sup> For example, like Sir Roger Newdigate’s grand tour to Rome, see McCarthy “Sir Roger Newdigate in Rome” 1998, pp. 41-8.

<sup>97</sup> Watkin *The Life and Work of C. R. Cockerell* 1974, pp. 4-5.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 112-3.

domestic vista and the one more associated with the 'polite' education on the Continent.<sup>99</sup> Classical literature was used by many as a way of appreciating the local landscape on the domestic tour<sup>100</sup> and new architecture that aped the classical was constructed by landowners who set their refurbished houses in estates, that had been modelled on the concept of a painting, incorporating a foreground, middle-ground and background.<sup>101</sup> However, the achievement of this painterly vision was not simply restricted to those with large family estates. If one could not landscape one's own grounds, then whilst journeying, other vistas could be transformed into a picture using a 'Claude' or 'Gray Glass'.<sup>102</sup> This was a portable, optical device consisting of a convex mirror that, when a landscape was viewed through it, would make the details of it less clear except for the foreground.<sup>103</sup> Alternatively, the 'Glass' consisted simply of a square of coloured, ordinary flat glass that would tint the landscape being viewed through it, making the tones and contours more painterly.<sup>104</sup> Thus through literature, architecture, landscaping and the Claude Glass, the actual British landscape was transformed into an ideal, more closely associated with that of the Classics.

The visit to the Continent and around Britain in order to experience a sense of the living Classical tradition also provided souvenirs that could be displayed on one's return in order to convey social status and polite education. Even though a person may not have been training specifically to become an architect or artist for example, it was considered important that one should obtain a knowledge of architectural design (perhaps by which to transform one's family seat), as well as purchasing pieces of art in order to furnish a personal family collection.<sup>105</sup> The quest for artefacts or tours to the best archaeological sites was therefore usually guided by local experts, agents or British advisors living in Florence in particular, as well as guide books.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Andrews *The Search for the Picturesque* 1989, pp. 3-23.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>101</sup> Williamson *Polite Landscapes* 1998, p. 59.

<sup>102</sup> Hunt "Verbal and Visual Meanings in Garden Design..." in *Garden History Issues* 1992, p. 237.

<sup>103</sup> Op cit., p. 68.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> For example, Lord Parker's son, George Parker aimed to collect for a new gallery in Shirburn (Connor "The fruits of the Grand Tour" 1998, pp. 23-24).

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-25; Nolta "The Body of the Collector..." 1997, p. 108.





Figure 1.5 Detail of St. Pancras Church by William and Henry Inwood, 1819-22

Figure 1.4 Detail of the Erechtheum from Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* pl. ii of Vol. II, Chapter II.

However the Classical experience of the Grand Tour was not restricted to the private or domestic realm of the upper class. Literature created by first hand accounts of ancient buildings by travellers and students of Greek and Roman antiquities, provided useful information for artists, designers and architects of public buildings. One of the most influential of these texts was by James Stuart and Nicholas Revett called *The Antiquities of Rome* and published in three folios from 1764-1784.<sup>107</sup> These were followed by two companion volumes edited by C. R. Cockerell in 1816 and 1830. The influence of these texts can be seen directly in the similarity between details of illustrations such as this view of the Erechtheum on the Acropolis (Figure 1.4), and actual buildings like the church of St. Pancras on Euston Road designed by William and Henry Inwood in 1819 (see Figure 1.5 for comparison). Though not a slavish copy of the Erechtheum, the church clearly draws on qualities from the original Greek building that made it, according to John Summerson, 'the queen of nineteenth-century churches'.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Mourdaunt Crook *The Greek Revival* 1968, p. 5.

<sup>108</sup> Summerson quoted in Mourdaunt Crook *The Greek Revival* 1968, p. 31.



Figure 1.6 The Temporary Elgin Room at the British Museum by Archibald Archer, 1819. B. R. Haydon is the figure on the far left just visible behind the statue.

It was not only architecture that drew from these Classical sources, but also fine art. Both Ian Jenkins (1992) and Frederick Cummings (1964) note how the Elgin Marbles (see Figure 1.6), promoted by Benjamin Robert Haydon, were considered to be the key to artistic education; Haydon himself studying them for several years from 1807.<sup>109</sup> Many other aspiring artists also learned from the Marbles from the time of their first display in Park Lane, and the numbers of artists are recorded until 1817 when there were 223 student applications to study the sculptures after they had been moved into the temporary Elgin room.<sup>110</sup> In 1811, John Henning Snr., another witness on the Select Committee of 1835, was amongst the artists who applied to study from the Marbles.<sup>111</sup> The models and drawings he made from the sculptures, producing copies of both the Elgin and Phigaleian sculptures, were of particular importance to his career.<sup>112</sup> These formed the main architectural elements of his work when he and his son (also John Henning) reproduced the Parthenon Frieze on the façade of the Athenaeum

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<sup>109</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, pp. 24-25. Cummings "Phidias in Bloomsbury..." 1964, pp. 323-327.

<sup>110</sup> Later numbers are only recorded for visits generally, rather than of students in particular. Visits totalled 4,398 in 1831 and 7,052 in 1836 (Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, p. 31).

<sup>111</sup> SC35 q. 868, p. 60.

<sup>112</sup> See reproductions in *Malden John Henning 1771-1851* 1977, pages not numbered.





Figure 1.7 The Athenaeum Club with its Parthenon frieze in blue (the extra story was built later). Decimus Burton, c.1830.



Figure 1.8 Detail of the Athenaeum frieze by John Henning & Son.

Club (see Figures 1.7 and 1.8)<sup>113</sup> and Hyde Park Corner (see 3.19 in Chapter 3), as well as reproducing many smaller copies for wealthy patrons.<sup>114</sup> Henning also went back to his native town of Paisley and delivered a lecture on the Elgin Marbles to the Philosophical Society there in 1832.<sup>115</sup>

The Classical was also highly influential in manufacture. In a study of the libraries of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manufactories in France, Germany and Britain, David Irwin (1972) notes that many texts relating to Classical antiquities were collected by manufacturers. Amongst the records that Irwin consulted were the details of the libraries of Josiah Wedgwood and Matthew Boulton, manufacturers from Birmingham who were noted in the Select Committee as providing superior examples of design. Irwin describes how Boulton and Wedgwood visited many antiquarian sites together and notes that at an early date Wedgwood, the ceramics manufacturer, saw an important role for the Classical style in providing a vocabulary for his products.<sup>116</sup> For this reason, as well as holding a library including books such as Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens*, he also began visiting the British Museum in 1768.<sup>117</sup> This will be detailed in Chapter 3.

<sup>113</sup> The Athenaeum Club was a "...mixture of Whigs, Radicals, savans, foreigners, dandies, authors, soldiers, sailors, lawyers, artists, doctors, and members of both Houses of Parliament..." (quoted from the *New Monthly Magazine* in Cowell *The Athenaeum* 1975, p. 42.

<sup>114</sup> SC35 q. 875, p. 61.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Irwin "Neo-Classical Design..." 1972, p. 289.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.



## The Political Significance of the Classical

But the adoption of the Classical was not simply an adherence to polite education indeed there was often much antagonism towards the traditional subjects of gentlemanly learning. Jeremy Bentham in the model of his Chrestomathic<sup>118</sup> school left out the teaching of Greek and Latin languages “...because they were not thought of as usefully connected with the real business of life”, an idea derived again from Francis Bacon.<sup>119</sup> During the 1835-6 Select Committee Charles Toplis, who was the vice president of the London Mechanics’ Institute - an establishment closely connected to Bentham,<sup>120</sup> noted that the teaching provided there was in opposition to the traditional “...sterile schemes of tuition, calculated merely to rear men for the cloister”.<sup>121</sup> He continued to comment that the mechanic did not possess the “...leisure and resources...to waste the whole term of education on the profitless acquisition of the Greek and Latin languages”.<sup>122</sup> Though the comments from Toplis’s testimony effectively adhered to the traditional split between gentlemanly polite learning and the useful practical knowledge of the lower spheres of society, it is clear that this was an ideal for all; Bentham had envisaged the Chrestomathic school specifically for children of the middle and upper class.<sup>123</sup>

Yet the Classical was profoundly influential and it began to take on elements of useful education becoming part of the vocabulary for defining the Nation’s politics, particularly for the Radicals. As William Hamilton noted in a published letter to Lord Elgin from 1836, the majority of public buildings undertaken in Britain over the “...last sixty years exhibit either the Greek or the Italian character”.<sup>124</sup> To support his argument he gave as examples the Town Halls in Manchester and Birmingham, as well as the London University, the Covent Garden Theatre and the National Gallery.<sup>125</sup> For these, as for other new building projects that were intended to give status to a city, the language of the Classical

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<sup>118</sup> Meaning useful knowledge.

<sup>119</sup> Cumming *Useful Learning* 1961, p. 27.

<sup>120</sup> He had been one of the founders (Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 241).

<sup>121</sup> SC35 q. 1553, p. 113.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Op cit. p. 21.

<sup>124</sup> Hamilton *Letter from W. R. Hamilton to the Earl of Elgin* 1836, p. 8.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.



was very important. The Town Hall in Birmingham, begun in 1832 by J. A. Hansom and Edward Welch, was very closely dependent for its design on the Temple of Castor and Pollux in Rome.<sup>126</sup> As a status symbol, the building with its association to the advanced civilisation of the Greeks, suggested the town's attempt to free itself from an uncivilised past.<sup>127</sup> If one considers figure 1.9 overleaf, it is apparent that the building was in great contrast with much of its surroundings. However this new construction was depicted as providing a beacon for the future, rather than portrayed as a crushing presence unsuitable for its location. Charles Reece Pemberton, a famous actor of the period who had been educated in Birmingham claimed that:

[t]he projection beyond the street line in the south front, which a skilful and scientific architect pointed out to me as a great defect, I like...It steps out with a generous and complacent bravery, as if it would say, 'I belong to you all, and will protect and befriend you all. I am here with you; come to me all as fellow and friends:' not as an insolent blusterer, with one leg thrust out like a bully, because he happens to be strong and a big fellow, as who should say 'Keep off, you rabble, you vagabonds...'<sup>128</sup>

Furthermore, in terms of the ideal of political democracy, the new Town Hall was also symbolic of the town's recently-gained representation in Parliament. The Reform Act of 1832, had provided two Members of Parliament for Birmingham for the first time; and Joshua Scholefield, one of these newly elected members, sat on both phases of the Select Committee in 1835 and 1836 (his son attending the 1849 Committee on the Schools of Design).<sup>129</sup> A Classical Town Hall therefore indicated the mature political and civilised status of this manufacturing town.

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<sup>126</sup> Jervis *High Victorian Design* 1983, p. 75. See also Dent *Old and New Birmingham* 1973, p. 470.

<sup>127</sup> Dent *Old and New Birmingham* 1973, p. 470.

<sup>128</sup> Pemberton quoted in *ibid.*, p. 473.

<sup>129</sup> He was elected along with Thomas Attwood with no opposition in 1832 (*Ibid.*, p. 624).

Figure 1.9 Birmingham Town Hall by J. A. Hansom and Edward Welch. Note the comparison with the shabby-looking buildings on the left.

There are many more examples of the adoption of the Classical as the language of public building during the early to mid-nineteenth-century, and virtually all the major cities whose MPs were also members of the Select Committee or that were represented by witnesses to the inquiry, were involved in this type of building project. Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield, all indicate the use of the Classical for urban regeneration and the cultural identification of their towns and cities, and perhaps the importance of new buildings was emphasised by the passage of the Municipal Corporations Act in 1835.<sup>130</sup> The Act reformed the government of 178 named incorporated boroughs and it was deemed more democratic than the Reform Act because the electoral process did not demand a £10 qualification fee as Parliamentary election did, even after 1832.<sup>131</sup> The Municipal Corporations Act was seen as an extension to the Reform Act as it challenged regional Tory corporations and effectively extended Whig and Radical influence.<sup>132</sup> Thus since the Classical signified democratic government, it was also deemed appropriate to signal municipal reform. As well as this there was further inspiration from the architecture of major cities such as Edinburgh and London, which had embraced the style so profoundly that they were often identified with Classical locations. Edinburgh was dubbed the ‘Athens of the North’ and London had often been hailed as a revival of many ancient Greek or

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<sup>130</sup> Warner *The Image of London* 1987, pp. 12-13. This occurred earlier in Scotland, see Morton “Civil society, municipal government and the state” 1998, p. 354.

<sup>131</sup> Fraser “Introduction: Municipal reform in historical perspective” in *A History of Modern Leeds* 1980, p. 2.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.



Roman cities from at least the eighteenth-century.<sup>133</sup> Clearly in the 1830s London was still growing and transforming, and this was described in Pigot's *Perambulator* (c.1831):

[t]o sketch with fidelity a picture of London, as it appears in 1831, is nearly as difficult a task as for an artist to delineate the evolutions of the Aurora Borealis – the changes of the one are nearly as rapid and as fanciful as those of the other; every thing around is the victim of mutation! The genius of improvement but waves his wand, when meanness crumbles into its primitive dust, and magnificence in a moment rises up in its place...<sup>134</sup>

The contribution of the Classical to British national identity in the early nineteenth-century cannot only be seen in the favoured architectural styles of the period, but also in the acquisition of antiquaries for the nation. In 1815 C. R. Cockerell had been one of the expedition party to acquire the Phigaleian Marbles for the British Museum from Bassae (where he had first been one of the group to excavate them in 1811-12) (see Figure 1.10 overleaf).<sup>135</sup> Cockerell also presented the British Museum with a section of the south frieze of the Parthenon in 1830<sup>136</sup> and although as has been noted previously his discoveries were to bring him a reputation for taste within British society, this was also an act of public and National advancement. It continued the work done by Lord Elgin in securing the Marbles from the Parthenon,<sup>137</sup> and this activity was in direct response to the Parisian Galerie des Antiquités that had opened to display the booty seized from Rome.<sup>138</sup> The Elgin Marbles had proved to be the cornerstone of the British Museum's collection through their reputation for an almost mystical instructional value as well as this political significance.

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Pigot & Co. *The Perambulator* c. 1831, p. 16.

<sup>135</sup> The institution had failed to secure his other discovery of the Aegina marbles that he also discovered during his Grand Tour (Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, pp. 78-9).

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>137</sup> Cockerell had applied to study them before leaving on his Tour (Watkin *The Life and Work of C. R. Cockerell* 1974, p. 96). The Marbles had first been exhibited in a makeshift gallery on Park Lane in 1807 (Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, p. 24). They were purchased by the Government in 1816 (Malden *John Henning 1771-1851* 1977, p. 6).

<sup>138</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, p. 18.

Figure 1.10 Idealised view of the temporary Phigaleian Room by James Stephanoff (actually in a makeshift apartment like the Elgin Marbles), 1818.

In addition to the political symbolism of the architecture and sculpture of Classical Greece, Greek social structure was also examined by some of the Benthamite Radicals. Arnaldo Momigliano (1952) gives a sense of this Benthamite study by describing the vision greeting John Arthur Roebuck (a ‘first order’ Benthamite and a member of the 1835 Select Committee) when he first arrived at a meeting of the Utilitarian Society.<sup>139</sup> Roebuck, he writes, “...found its members in ‘a low, half-furnished, desolate sort of room’ discussing ‘a critique for some review of an edition of a Greek author’”.<sup>140</sup> One of the major exponents of Greek political history was George Grote, a ‘first order’ Benthamite and another member of the 1835 Committee. Grote, though receiving a traditional Charterhouse education, was encouraged by his father not to go to university. Instead he was employed in the family banking business of Prescott and Grote in Threadneedle Street.<sup>141</sup> This may be one reason why the Radical was able to transform and imbue the traditionally ‘polite’ subject of Greek history, with a more dynamic and useful air derived from the spirit of enterprise.

Grote was one of the leading historians of ancient Greece but it was not until later in 1846 that the first two volumes of his *History of Greece* went into

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<sup>139</sup> A Benthamite meeting place along with the ‘London Debating Society’ (Finer *The Life and Times of Edwin Chadwick* 1970, p. 28.

<sup>140</sup> Roebuck quoted in Momigliano *George Grote and the Study of Greek History* 1952, p. 7.

<sup>141</sup> Chambers “George Grote’s *History of Greece* in *George Grote and the Study of Greek History* 1996, pp. 2-3.



circulation.<sup>142</sup> However, Grote was concerned with ancient history before this time and spent the decades prior to publication sharpening his arguments for the later text in his essay “Of the Athenian Government” from 1821 that remained unpublished but was widely circulated. He also wrote critiques of the more famous historians like William Mitford in the *Westminster Review*.<sup>143</sup> This political context was a pertinent arena for Grote to not only air his version of ancient Greek history, but also as a vehicle to justify and explore his own political theories for Governmental change in the 1820s and ‘30s. These ideas included the reform of parliamentary representation and the secret ballot.<sup>144</sup> Thus, in a similar way to the championing of Classical architecture as a symbol of civilised and democratic Parliamentary reform, Grote’s examination of Greek political history supported his arguments for more extensive Parliamentary reform.

The utility of ancient Greek history was also a part of the writings of political economists, although as Neville Morley (1998) notes economy and history were rarely combined by the historians of ancient Greece.<sup>145</sup> However political economists often utilised the history and writings from Ancient Greece to support their own arguments about economic theory in the late eighteenth- and early years of the nineteenth-centuries. For example, Adam Smith in his *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) found explanation and justification for his ideas on colonialism, national defence and education in the work of Classical authors.<sup>146</sup> Similarly, James Steuart understood the issues of luxury and frugality by again finding evidence from the Classical world. He saw that there were two types of luxury, one based on industry such as that represented by the cities of Sydon, Tyre, Carthage, Athens and Alexandria, and one based on pillage such as the ancient monarchies of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome.<sup>147</sup> Steuart believed that the former model

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-11.

<sup>144</sup> Op cit., pp. 8-9. Morley “Political Economy and Classical Antiquity” 1998, p. 96.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid. This is both in terms of his connection with Radical economics and also his employment as a banker.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

corresponded to the accumulation of wealth in the society of Britain in the early nineteenth-century.<sup>148</sup>

Although as far as I am aware, a connection to his economic theories and the Elgin Marbles was not an argument forwarded by Steuart, it is interesting to consider this in relationship to the debate surrounding the acquisition of the Parthenon sculptures. As I noted previously in securing the Marbles for the British Museum, London was drawing itself in direct competition particularly with Paris and the Classical displays at the Louvre. Yet some moral distinction was drawn between these two exhibitions. The British press at least just like Steuart's economic theory of luxury, considered the Elgin Marbles with their association with the "...freedom-loving Athens of Pericles' day", to symbolise Britain.<sup>149</sup> While this was seen in contrast to the French identification of Paris with Rome and the acquisition of Roman antiquities, which were objects that had themselves been acquired as the spoils of invasion by the Romans.<sup>150</sup> Perhaps also this sense of 'rescuing' (as opposed to seizing) Greek heritage had been accentuated by the Greek War of Independence, which was finally concluded in 1830 when Greece gained its independence from the Turkish.<sup>151</sup> This war had been envisaged in Europe as a fight between the civilisation of the Greeks and the barbarity of Islam and was fought by many French and British artists most famously Lord Byron, who died in 1824 at Missolonghi.<sup>152</sup> Byron became the personification of this fight for civilisation, symbolised as it was by the Classical style.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, p. 18.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., see also Guilmard-Geddes "The First Empire" 1977, pp. 456-458.

<sup>151</sup> Athanassoglou-Kallmyer *French Images from the Greek War of Independence, 1821-1830* 1989, p. 9.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., pp. 85-87.



Figure 1.11 London University by William Wilkins 1827

Within Britain therefore, there was also a sense that the Classical could be used in the fight for civilisation against barbarity, but this was not only the perceived barbarity of Islam, it also included the apparent lack of civility inherent among the lower orders of society. Perhaps this is why the vocabulary of new architecture associated with accessible education for the lower order in society such as the London University (“...we hail the rising of that bright star which has lately appeared in this hemisphere”<sup>154</sup>) and Mechanics’ Institutes all over the country, tended to adopt the Classical style as a symbol of their function (see Figures 1.11 and 1.12).

Figure 1.12 The Mechanics’ Institute (or Liverpool Institute School) in Liverpool. A. H. Holme 1835-57. Note the grand, column Classical portico (Ionic order).<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Pigot & Co. *The Perambulator* c. 1831, p. 57.

<sup>155</sup> Hughes *Liverpool: city of architecture* 1999, p. 50.

## The Gothic

But the Classical was not the only style of architecture to have social significance. The Gothic or Elizabethan styles were also utilised by architects and were sometimes overtly placed in opposition to the Classical.<sup>156</sup> The Gothic style of architecture had had a very chequered history in British architectural theory during the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries. For many years it was identified as the style most linked to barbarism, superstition and Catholicism, all qualities that did not recommend it to a British audience ambitious for cultural improvement.<sup>157</sup> However the appeal of the style was never completely quashed by these associations and, through the interest of the Society of Antiquaries in local archaeology, the architecture was preserved and the knowledge of its construction was valued.<sup>158</sup> Some architects and scholars such as Horace Walpole and William Kent,<sup>159</sup> recorded, identified and reproduced the Gothic and Elizabethan styles mainly for domestic architecture, although this was not its exclusive application. However even into the nineteenth-century, the Gothic was still commonly associated with the gentleman and his estate. A text by Francis Goodwin called *Rural Architects* (1835), noted that

...when classic architecture is so universally understood, whoever thinking for himself, determines to build in the old English style, may be pronounced a person of independent notions, superior to prejudice, and by inference a man of taste.<sup>160</sup>

An interest in the Gothic style began to develop through its association with the picturesque and romantic movements<sup>161</sup> where an interest in the Middle Ages and British history and myth took the place of the Classical in providing the inspiration and apparatus through which to experience the landscape.<sup>162</sup> As such the style became part of a growing desire to symbolise the unique quality of

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<sup>156</sup> Clark *The Gothic Revival* 1962, p. 32.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., p. 15, pp. 42-3.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., pp. 24-26.

<sup>159</sup> See the example of Rousham in Oxfordshire built originally in the 1720s and redesigned with Gothic and Classical details by William Kent in the 1730s (Hunt "Verbal and Visual Meanings in Garden Design" in *Garden History Issues* 1992, p. 152).

<sup>160</sup> Goodwin quoted in Clark *The Gothic Revival* 1962, pp. 110-111.

<sup>161</sup> Peter Howard (*Landscapes* 1991) dates the picturesque from 1790-1830 and the romantic from 1830-1870.

<sup>162</sup> Op cit., p. 66.



Britishness (which was often replaced by the term ‘Englishness’), a relatively new concept to develop with the unification of England, Scotland and Wales in 1707.<sup>163</sup> This was in tandem with other changes such as those in domestic poetry that also attempted to define the qualities that made the landscape of Britain different. The work of John Milton and William Wordsworth began to replace the reliance on the Classical poets who had previously been used to provide a way of accessing the beauty of the British landscape.<sup>164</sup> Thus as John Dixon Hunt (1992) has commented, both Homer’s words and the British landscape and its architecture was being “...selected, miniaturized, Englished – that is, made more “natural” or Gothick”.<sup>165</sup>

The growth in the popularity of the Gothic and Elizabethan styles allied to the concept of national heritage is evidenced by a growing number of texts including A. W. N. Pugin and Edward Willson’s *Specimens of Gothic Architecture* (1821-23) and the *Glossary of Terms used in Grecian, Roman, and Gothic Architecture* (1836). In an edition of *Notes and Queries* from 1850, this latter book was flagged as the text that began the most successful period of Gothic antiquarian study.<sup>166</sup> With hindsight we know that the Gothic was to become a strong force in British civic architecture, but in the 1830s this change was only just beginning, and it was perhaps spurred on by the building of the new Houses of Parliament.

In 1834 the original building had burnt down and, since the Radical members of the House of Commons (among them William Ewart) had been campaigning for a new building before this event, the demise of the old building seemed to be rather timely.<sup>167</sup> However, the decision to rebuild in the Gothic or Elizabethan style was not universally supported and it would appear that, given the immense amount of civic building in the Classical style, this choice had been against the flow of fashion. But the two reasons for the choice given were that to build in the

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<sup>163</sup> The Act of Union linked Scotland to England and Wales under a Protestant ruler (Colley *Britons* 1992, p. 11).

<sup>164</sup> John Dixon Hunt (1992) suggests that this connection of landscape and poetry should not be confined to the most obvious Romantic poets, but can also be considered in the light of more amateur literature (*Gardens and the Picturesque* pp. 151-152).

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

<sup>166</sup> Anon 12 Oct. 1850, p. 219.

<sup>167</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P.* 1960, pp. 65-66.

Gothic or Elizabethan style would be to allow an easier way of linking the new building with the remains of the old one. But perhaps more significantly, it was considered that the style was more British and therefore fitting for a Parliamentary building. The arguments against the style were fairly clear, particularly as the Classical had signalled the growing democracy of parliamentary representation after Reform. William Hamilton believed that this was a message that should be made by any new Houses of Parliament, and for him the Gothic style harked back to a more primitive time before the Enlightenment.<sup>168</sup> This was a concept echoed by C. R. Cockerell in his analysis of Gothic architecture as 'neo-feudal', a phrase clearly inferring a political state that did not befit a newly empowered democratic Britain.<sup>169</sup>

For Pugin however, the Gothic style was indicative of a far better past than the legacy of Greece. For him the Classical in its most extreme form was characterised by a cold logic and industrial style. In his 1836 text *Contrasts*,<sup>170</sup> Pugin overtly opposed this Puritanical plainer style of architecture to the traditional Gothic, while simultaneously relating these architectural styles to opposing forms of social organisation. Pugin associated the Gothic with a feudal, localised form of government that he conceived of as engendering a more caring and closely-knit society. But Classical Puritanism Pugin related to an unfeeling system of governing that managed an anonymous population and in so doing produced all the evils of a modern society such as poverty and sickness, as well as social and theological ruin (see figure 1.13 overleaf).<sup>171</sup> This criticism

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<sup>168</sup> Hamilton *Letter from W. R. Hamilton to the Earl of Elgin* 1836, p. 18.

<sup>169</sup> Watkin *The Life and Work of C. R. Cockerell* 1974, p. 80.

<sup>170</sup> The full title being *Contrasts: or, a Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages, and Corresponding Buildings of the Present Day, shewing the Present Decay of Taste*.

<sup>171</sup> Pugin *Contrasts* 1969, Appendix illustrations.



Figure 1.13 Illustration from A. W. Pugin's *Contrasts* (1836).

was clearly aimed at the Philosophical Radicals as Pugin displays a Panopticon style workhouse derived from the Bentham's' architectural scheme. This appears to echo the model of a workhouse designed by Sampson Kempthorne that was contained in the first Annual Report of the Commissioners of the Poor Law in 1835 (see Figure 1.14 overleaf).<sup>172</sup> The Poor Law was a Radical supported policy that changed the provision for the poor in 1832; its secretary was Bentham's assistant Edwin Chadwick.<sup>173</sup> In addition Pugin illustrates the fate of those who remained 'unclaimed' after death by their relatives. These bodies of the poor were sent to the dissectionist (see 'for dissection' on the coffin in Pugin's image), a religious abomination as far as Pugin and the majority of the population were concerned.<sup>174</sup> Yet this had also been a policy championed by Henry Warburton, another 'first order' Benthamite and member of the 1835 Committee, and the Anatomy Act had been passed in 1833.<sup>175</sup> In effect the Poor Law and the Anatomy Act worked in tandem and were accompanied by the later New Poor Law of 1834 resulting in stricter and more wide-ranging powers for the

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<sup>172</sup> Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 143.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>174</sup> Richardson *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* 1989, p. 5-29

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., pp. 126-128.

management of the Poor, conferring "...respect and approval upon the Benthamite dictum of utility in a most tender area of human consciousness".<sup>176</sup> Ruth Richardson (1989) explains that

[e]ntrance into the workhouse entailed the breaking up of families, the sale or destruction of personal belongings, the rigid curtailment of personal freedoms, meagre rations, uniform clothing, and a host of punishments for minor infractions of discipline. The dissection of the dead was an inspired addition...<sup>177</sup>

Figure 1.14 Model of a workhouse by Sampson Kempthorne, Annual Report of the Commissioners of the Poor Law, 1835.

Thus the choice of the Gothic or Classical was not simply a stylistic one, but it also symbolised the vision of what the individual was to be in the eyes of Government. Thus the arguments that surrounded the building of the new Houses of Parliament did not centre on the issue of style per se, but rather on the meaning given to the differing building processes by which the Gothic and Classical styles were thought to be produced. This consideration of process led to the contrast being made between the amateur realm and that of the professional.

## **‘Amateur’ versus ‘Professional’**

In order to map this argument it is useful to return to the Grand Tour of Charles Robert Cockerell who seemed to epitomise the gentleman and his polite education. Certainly he viewed the whole adventure rather romantically, and had to be reminded by his father why he was actually embarking on the Tour. In one

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 267.



letter, he was warned against simply becoming "...a 'cognoscenti'", because that would have "...no value to success in [the] *Practice* [of architecture]".<sup>178</sup> This is an important issue because it indicates, as Frances Yates (1987) has noted, that as well as providing a polite education the discovery of Vitruvian ideas in Britain heralded the beginnings of the architectural *profession*.<sup>179</sup> In the evidence of George J. Morant, a witness on the 1836 session of the Select Committee, there is perhaps a sense of why Vitruvius' ideas may have signalled this change. Morant comments that the Classical style of building is more "applicable"<sup>180</sup> to culture in Britain and this suggests both that it suited the British temperament in some way, but also that the Classical provided rules that could be learned and *applied*. He saw this in opposition to the Gothic, which he was asked to make a direct comparison to.<sup>181</sup>

The Classical offered certain rules and orders that had been theorised and recorded by Vitruvius and Palladio.<sup>182</sup> The rise of these publications in the fifteenth-century, along with an English translation of Euclid, created the first demonstration of architectural theory in Britain – the building of the Swan theatre.<sup>183</sup> This signalled the beginnings of the architectural profession, and Inigo Jones who is seen as the first modern architect also built the first neo-Classical style buildings (as opposed to a general form like a theatre) in Britain gaining the title 'Vitruvius Britannicus'.<sup>184</sup> Though a Roman author, Vitruvius' theories still played an important role in the early nineteenth-century and they had been outlined in a book entitled *The Civil Architecture of Vitruvius* that was published in 1812 by the architect of both the London University and the National Gallery, William Wilkins (a witness on the 1836 Select Committee session). Thus the link between professional architecture and the heavily theorised Classical style was firmly established.

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<sup>178</sup> Op cit., p. 24.

<sup>179</sup> Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, pp. 20-41.

<sup>180</sup> SC36 qq. 567-571, p. 48.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Summerson *The Classical Language of Architecture* 1985, pp. 9-17.

<sup>183</sup> Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, pp. 99-100. See also Orrell *The Human Stage* 1988, pp. 46-7.

<sup>184</sup> Summerson "Three Elizabethan Architects" 1957, pp. 218-9; Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, p. 81.

However, Pugin challenged this relationship by questioning whether in fact the Classical did offer such clear and applicable theories. Pugin suggested that although he also strongly believed in "...fitness of the design to the purpose", that the Classical style was often rather nonsensical in comparison to the Gothic.<sup>185</sup> He suggested that:

[n]o kind of propriety or fitness has been considered in their [Classical buildings'] composition. Some have porticoes of Greek temples, surmounted by steeples of miserable outline and worse detail. Others are a mixture of distorted Greek and Roman buildings; and a host have been built in perfectly nondescript style, forming the most offensive masses of building.<sup>186</sup>

By contrast, in their construction of the new Houses of Parliament, Pugin and Charles Barry established the viability of a Gothic style for *professional* architects (see Figure 1.15). This design showed that the Gothic could possess a purposefulness and unity in design, rather than the quaint and jumbled styles that had appeared within private architecture. However despite the obvious ability of these architects to produce so striking a building as the new Gothic setting for Parliament, the arguments regarding the association of the Gothic with amateurism were not over.

Figure 1.15 Houses of Parliament (Palace of Westminster), London. Charles Barry and A. W. N. Pugin 1835-1868.

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<sup>185</sup> Pugin *Contrasts* 1969, p. 1.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.



The key to this appears to lie in the difficulty of a professional within British society to gain status as a person of social authority. Though the role of the professional architect was modelled on the 'autocrat' according to Yates,<sup>187</sup> still by the 1830s it seemed that the authority of the professional was superseded by that of the gentlemanly amateur. In his testimony to the Select Committee in 1836, William Wilkins was questioned on the restricted position of his new National Gallery. Wilkins complained that he had been forced to move the building back from its original position, compressing the space inside it. This was due, he explained, to "...the amateur architects... who induced the gentlemen in the neighbourhood to excite the parish against the proposed position of the building, and they unfortunately succeeded".<sup>188</sup> Similar arguments about amateurism also dogged the competition for the Houses of Parliament.



Figure 1.16 Toddington Manor, Gloucestershire. Charles Hanbury Tracy c. 1819-1840.

Charles Hanbury Tracy was a judge of the designs submitted for the Houses of Parliament and he was also a member of the 1835 Select Committee. He had built his own family seat in Gloucestershire during the years of 1819-1840 (see Figure 1.16).<sup>189</sup> Toddington Manor had been gained by Charles Hanbury's marriage to a daughter of the Tracy family and this acquisition gave him the material symbol by which to succeed beyond his own family's background,

<sup>187</sup> Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, p. 88.

<sup>188</sup> SC36 q. 1206, p. 101.

<sup>189</sup> Watkin *The Life and Work of C. R. Cockerell* 1974, pp. 79-80.



whose money was derived from ironworks in Pontypool.<sup>190</sup> The house was designed by Hanbury Tracy himself and adopted the Gothicism that was perhaps drawn from his time as a student in Oxford.<sup>191</sup> This education could not be afforded by the majority of families, and so was also indicative of an upward movement through the social ranks. Toddington Manor was much praised when newly built giving Hanbury Tracy a social status as a man of taste, ability and education though ultimately, he was still recognised as an amateur. Interestingly, C. R. Cockerell was taken to see the house by his father and later commented that though he found it to be "...wonderfully [sic.] conceived and executed", that perhaps Hanbury Tracy had "...appeared not to have conceived the plan, being chiefly subservient to exterior effect".<sup>192</sup>

Cockerell's comment that Hanbury Tracy had not considered the overall plan of his own house because he had been preoccupied with outer appearances, was reiterated during the competition to create the New Houses of Parliament. In choosing a design it was thought that the judges, including Hanbury Tracy, "...confined [themselves] to the consideration of the beauty and grandeur of the general design". This, the judges had focussed on, in opposition to the more structural aspects of the building, a professional knowledge of which they considered they did not possess.<sup>193</sup> Cockerell, whose design had been rejected along with those of William Wilkins and Thomas Leverton Donaldson (who was also a Select Committee witness), chaired a meeting of these architects in which it was considered that the men judging the competition were "...amateur gentlemen, unassisted by scientific knowledge or professional advice". The architects felt that their "...incompetency" was "...apparent in the selections made".<sup>194</sup> Thus here, there is a clear division between a gentlemanly knowledge and a professional architectural education, a tension that particularly emerges when the architecture in question is intended for the public sphere, as opposed to the more private one.

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<sup>190</sup> Johnson *The Gloucestershire Gentry* 1989, pp. 252-3.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> C. R. Cockerell probably saw the house when visiting his uncle's house which is only a few miles away, and also in Gloucestershire (Watkin *The Life and Work of C. R. Cockerell* 1974, pp. 79-80).

<sup>193</sup> *Report of the Commissioners* 1836, p. 93.

<sup>194</sup> *Catalogue of the Designs offered for the New Houses of Parliament* (1836), pp. 5-6.



Another example of the dominance of the gentlemanly amateur was Sir Robert Peel who was briefly Prime Minister in 1835 and also on the first session of the Select Committee. Peel also transformed his own family seat of Drayton Manor that he had acquired after his father's death, and with the aid of Sir Robert Smirke, rebuilt this house between 1831 and 1835.<sup>195</sup> His extensive instructions to the architect were based on a rigorous study whereby he attempted to "...rationalise the Elizabethan style", though in so doing according to J. Mordaunt Crook (1966), "...ended up with a jumble of architectural souvenirs".<sup>196</sup> Again, this was the work of an amateur.

Figure 1.17 Robert Peel showing his paintings in 1844, watercolour by Jemima Blackburn.

But the criticism of 'amateur' though levelled at Sir Robert Peel, did not refer to his Drayton Manor house, which after all had been constructed by Sir Robert Smirke a professional architect. Rather the accusation of amateurism was aimed at him because of his keen interest in collecting paintings. Peel supported many British artists such as William Clarkson Stanfield, William Collins and David Wilkie, but his passion was more predominantly focused on Dutch and Flemish works. These paintings were displayed at both his country and town houses, the latter having also been built by Smirke, though much earlier in 1822.<sup>197</sup> There were two types of display available to Peel in his town house. The one was an

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<sup>195</sup> Unfortunately this building no longer exists.

<sup>196</sup> Mordaunt Crook "Sir Robert Peel" 1966, p. 10.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

oblong gallery that held a number of paintings on the first floor of the building (see figure 1.17). The other was the family's domestic living quarters in which many other works were exhibited, and as visitors remarked, the family lived amongst. These paintings were displayed in a far more informal setting therefore, and it was in Whitehall Gardens that Peel entertained many people of society during the 1830s and '40s.<sup>198</sup> The circumstances of this collection are perhaps why his role as a trustee of the National Gallery was brought into question during the 1836 session of the Select Committee.

In the questioning of William Segquier (the keeper of the National Gallery), John Bowring asked whether politicians were appropriate to be trustees of national institutions. Bowring claimed that the question was asked because firstly, politicians had many other important duties and thus were unlikely to be able to devote the necessary time to the management of a national collection. And secondly, as their main area of expertise was in politics, then perhaps they did not possess the appropriate specialist knowledge by which to judge paintings of the quality required for the nation.<sup>199</sup> However, Segquier assured Bowring that in being "...men of science", politicians as trustees had sufficient expertise.<sup>200</sup> In so commenting, the witness inferred that there was some level that certain men attained, allowing them to have a general understanding in any situation without being a specialist in that subject.

The subject of Peel's trusteeship was not dismissed however. During rather more pointed questioning Samuel Woodburn, a professional art dealer, was asked to convey his views on the issue, and he suggested that certain schools of painting were easier to judge than others, opposing the apparently easy to study Dutch school (of which Peel was a collector) with the 'Italian pictures' which required "...a very long study".<sup>201</sup> William Ewart summarised the witness's comment by suggesting that "[i]n England it appears they [managers of national collections] take the advice of possessors of pictures, and in France they take the advice of

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>199</sup> SC36 qq. 1454-1459, p. 126.

<sup>200</sup> SC36 q. 1458, p. 126.

<sup>201</sup> SC36 q. 1702, p. 137.



*experts...*”.<sup>202</sup> Similarly Edward Solly, another professional art collector, considered that the trustees have been chosen because they are “...possessors of small collections of pictures”.<sup>203</sup> According to this witness, this was certainly not the best criterion for those planning a national collection, and again in a comment seemingly aimed at Peel, he noted “...it is as different as the knowledge of the pretty Dutch pictures and of the grander style of the ancient Italian painters”.<sup>204</sup> The master of a cabinet of pictures was not to be seen as a professional and clearly Peel’s domestic town collection was considered to be “...the finest cabinet of Dutch pictures ever collected by an *amateur*”.<sup>205</sup>

In this way the 1830s were marked by a developing criticism of the gentlemanly amateur, whose social rank meant that his apparently inherent knowledge was held in high esteem and privileged, allowing him to take on certain influential and managerial duties. But this was a very complex argument. Burnet’s ‘spiral of success’ demonstrated how the boundaries of what a gentleman was were blurring and the question began to be posed as to whether the role of a gentleman and the role of a governor of society were necessarily one and the same thing.

Bowring, Ewart and many other Radical Members of Parliament, continued to mount an attack on what they felt to be the monopoly of the gentlemanly amateur over public institutions.<sup>206</sup> This adherence to the privileging of rank over expertise, they saw as restricting the potential economic powers of the country. Their attacks are clear in two further examples where the amateur gentleman versus the professional was central - the discussions concerning the collection of another architect Sir John Soane, and in the attack on the Royal Academy during the 1835-6 Select Committee.

As John Elsner (1994) notes in his assessment of the collection of Sir John Soane, there was a growing problematic between gentlemanly collection as part of the acquisition of status within polite society, and the more professional,

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<sup>202</sup> Original italics SC36 q. 1700, p. 137.

<sup>203</sup> SC36 q. 1836, p. 146.

<sup>204</sup> SC36, q. 1837, pp. 146-7.

<sup>205</sup> My emphasis, contemporary art critic quoted by Mordaunt Crook “Sir Robert Peel” 1966, p. 8.

<sup>206</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P.* 1960, p. 66.

commercial world of national identification and societal construction. Elsner describes how the collection of Sir John Soane, secured for the nation in 1833 when the architect was still alive, was to be maintained in the *domestic* space of its owner (see Figure 1.18).<sup>207</sup> As such, the collection lay within the sphere of personal symbolism through which Soane had constructed his social status as a man of considerable personal taste. Yet as part of his architectural study in the same way as Cockerell's researches during his Grand Tour, the objects also lay on the edge of his professional practice as an architect. This confusion of the public and private spheres caused difficulties with regard to the management of his home and gallery that the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge commented on. In their *Penny Magazine* it was suggested that the house should be kept as a private arena, with its models remaining accessible only to the "...architects, artists and persons of taste" that would have been invited to view it when Sir John was alive.<sup>208</sup>

Figure 1.18 The Dome in Sir John Soane's House (13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London). Painted by Joseph Michael Gandy in 1813.

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<sup>207</sup> Elsner "A Collector's Model of Desire..." in *The Cultures of Collecting*, p. 157.

<sup>208</sup> Anonymous writer quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 158-9. For more details of the Soane museum see Thornton "The Soane as It Was" 1990, pp. 228-247.



The Select Committee inquiry into the Royal Academy (RA) was another area where the complexity of the amateur/professional debate was visible. This investigation in 1836 appears to have been part of the same predominantly Radical opposition to the powerful monopoly of the gentlemanly amateur over public institutions, which continued into the later part of the nineteenth-century.<sup>209</sup> The key element of this argument was that although the Royal Academy as an institution was funded by public money, it appeared to be managed as a private and autonomous organisation, which did not provide the public service that was expected of it.<sup>210</sup> According to many witnesses in the Committee the favouring of its own members was extremely blatant and consisted of a number of injustices.

Figure 1.19 The visit of the Prince of Wales to the Royal Academy Summer exhibition, 1787 by P. Martini after J. H. Ramberg.

The main issue seemed to consist in the management of the Royal Academy Summer exhibition. Figure 1.19 shows the large amount of paintings exhibited in a typical RA show. Although this type of display tactic was traditional for the period<sup>211</sup> it was a point of complaint for many of the witnesses. Firstly, many considered that the choice of paintings favoured those by the Royal Academy members themselves, even though many of the fellows did not undertake work in the historical genre (the highest branch of art), preferring the more lucrative

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<sup>209</sup> Colin Trodd (1997) notes how in 1851, the *Builder* had considered the Royal Academy as being open "...to every shirtless amateur" ("The Authority of Art" p. 3).

<sup>210</sup> Select Committee *Report* 1836, p. viii; George Rennie SC36 q. 649, p. 57.

<sup>211</sup> O'Doherty *Inside the White Cube* 1986, pp. 15-17.

portrait or the popular landscape.<sup>212</sup> Secondly, even when paintings that were not made by Royal Academicians were chosen, they were often hung in areas that were unsuitable for viewing, the Academy painters again enjoying the more advantageous positions on the wall.<sup>213</sup> Thirdly, when paintings were to be re-varnished so that they looked their best, only the Royal Academicians were allowed to do this, leaving the other painters' work to look dusty and shabby by comparison.<sup>214</sup> Finally, no visiting painters were allowed to the private view and dinner that accompanied the exhibition, or to invite guests that may have become patrons of their work.<sup>215</sup>

Furthermore there were arguments regarding the fact that engravers could only become associates, and not full fellows of the institution;<sup>216</sup> as well as the issue that the Royal Academy did not allow any of its fellows to be involved with other societies.<sup>217</sup> In addition it was also noted that the Academy failed to give consistent educational provision as it was supposed to do, and that the various yearly lectures were not always delivered. Thus, although Bermingham describes the founding of the Royal Academy as a move towards forming the artistic *profession* in opposition to the activity of painting as an occupation of the gentlemanly amateur,<sup>218</sup> the apparent concessions to members were interpreted by the Radicals in the Select Committee, as the Academy simultaneously having a monopoly over the arts, whilst enjoying the status of a private gentleman's club.

## The Governing of Society

Throughout this chapter there have been two main concepts identified as arising from changes in the perception of social organisation in Britain from the

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<sup>212</sup> For example the evidence of John Martin SC36 qq. 815-816, p. 70. In a later comment on landscape, it was considered to be a genre of nothing more than "...clever mechanism and copyism of the hand" (quoted in Trodd "The Authority of Art" 1997, p. 4).

<sup>213</sup> George Rennie SC36 qq. 679-680, p. 59.

<sup>214</sup> George Rennie SC36 qq. 676-677, p. 59.

<sup>215</sup> George Rennie SC36 q. 692, pp. 60-61.

<sup>216</sup> John Burnet SC36 q. 924, p. 79.

<sup>217</sup> George Clint SC36 q. 1048, p. 87.

<sup>218</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p.



sixteenth-century – the role of the gentleman as the governor of society<sup>219</sup> and the importance of having an education that would allow the gentleman to serve society, i.e. a useful education.<sup>220</sup> Though the notions of what it was to be a gentleman had blurred considerably by the 1830s, there remained the question of whether the status of a gentleman, who had been educated in the theory of practical matters, outweighed the authority of a professional who had gained specialist knowledge and position through practical paid work. This was particularly the case if the ‘specialism’ of those who had earned the skill in practice and were therefore of a lower status, required that they should adopt an overview of society that was traditionally akin to that of the gentleman. This was the position of the Philosophical Radicals whose political approach demanded that they take a viewpoint in which society was viewed and orchestrated as a whole. At the beginning of the chapter it was noted that these changes in the perception of society had come about through the development of Baconian theory, and this legacy of the problematic relationship between the professional and the amateur gentleman can clearly be seen in the history of science.

The Royal Society for the Improving of Natural Knowledge, which had been officially founded in 1660, was one of the first of many societies to emerge in Britain based on the common interests of its founder members.<sup>221</sup> The society and particularly the scientific society of this period offered as an institution a potentially equal opportunity to people who were not of the highest class. Thus in appearance, such an organisation drew those more traditionally of the genteel class and those of the lower orders together for a common cause. Thomas Sprat appeared to portray this ideal of communal and egalitarian work in his *History of the Royal Society* 1667, aligning it to Francis Bacon’s utopian society of the *New Atlantis*.<sup>222</sup> Bacon’s vision had portrayed the orchestration of an entire society, in

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<sup>219</sup> Sloan ‘*A Noble Art*’ 2000, p. 11.

<sup>220</sup> Dury *The Reformed School* 1649, pp. 40-41.

<sup>221</sup> The Society was thought to exist in spirit many years before this date but it was officially founded in this year, receiving a Royal Charter two years later (Johnson, F. R. in Wiener & Noland 1957, pp. 332-333).

<sup>222</sup> “...[A]nd we find my Noble Rarities to be every day given in, not onely by the hands of Learned and profess’d Philosophers; but from the Shops of *Mechanicks*; from the Voyages of *Merchants*; from the Ploughs of *Husbandmen*; from the Sports, the Fishponds, the Parks, the Gardens of *Gentlemen*...” (Sprat *History of the Royal Society* 1667, p. 72; Bacon ‘*New Atlantis*’ in *Sylva Sylvarum* 1639, pp. 8-16).

order that the whole of humankind should have a role in the advancement of natural knowledge.<sup>223</sup> Thomas Thomson reiterated the ideal in 1812 when he described the reasons for the formation of the Royal Society, noting that "...all were conscious of the immense space which was to be explored, of the little progress that could be made by a single individual, and of the necessity of mutual co-operation, and the division of scientific labour".<sup>224</sup>

But if one looks again at Sprat's utopian image, there is a strong sense that he recognised that knowledge and status were sometimes incompatible, and the author was careful to outline the various roles and merits of different employment in relation to scientific endeavour. He explained that although the Royal Society welcomed a range of members, it was not to be dominated by mechanicks or shop-keepers.<sup>225</sup> This was because unlike "...*Gentlemen* [who were], free, and unconfin'd", i.e. did not need to *apply* the results of their experiments, those in the professions were generally biased towards practical results (perhaps for financial gain), and would therefore be tempted to distort their scientific research.<sup>226</sup> Bermingham explains further that economic independence was seen as a pre-requisite for the position of 'gentleman' "...for without it he could not be a free agent and could not be trusted to speak truthfully and act honourably".<sup>227</sup> The point was similarly made in 1831 when James Millingen published *Some Remarks of the State of Learning in the Fine-Arts*. His introduction, which also discussed science, commented that the "Intellectual Sciences" being "...not immediately lucrative...only... to enlarge the mind...have been unnoticed, or held in utter contempt" by the Government.<sup>228</sup> In response he reiterated the importance of maintaining an objective viewpoint.<sup>229</sup> The gentleman in the 1830s still maintained a role in the development of practical knowledge as a guardian of scientific objectivity, which also allowed him to maintain a particular social status, derived from his gentility.

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<sup>223</sup> Bacon 'New Atlantis' in *Sylva Sylvarum* 1639, p. 26.

<sup>224</sup> Thomson *History of the Royal Society* 1812, p. 4.

<sup>225</sup> Op cit., p. 67.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., pp. 66-67.

<sup>227</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p. 36.

<sup>228</sup> Millingen *Some Remarks of the State of Learning in the Fine-Arts Some Remarks of the State of Learning in the Fine-Arts* 1831, pp. 2-3.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.



Figure 1.20 Caricature drawn by Henry de la Beche c. 1831.

As such a similar incompatibility with certain activities and ‘viewpoints’ depending on social status was also visible in the same era. Martin Rudwick (1985) notes how the gentleman of the Geological Society of London commented that, when engaged personally in fieldwork as part of their scientific research, they were constantly being mistaken for someone of a lower class.<sup>230</sup> Fieldwork was practical work demanding the sporting of serviceable clothing, which removed the usual signs of gentlemanly status. Figure 1.20 shows Henry de la Beche’s sketch of the two types of geologist that existed in the Geological Society of London in 1831. On the right “the plain “Baconian” field geologist”, a man who wore outdoor clothing and carried a hammer and bag for collecting geological specimens.<sup>231</sup> In contrast the figure on the left was definitely a gentleman carrying a text behind his back (and thus was not acknowledging he had read it), wearing a tailcoat, barrister’s wig and the tinted glasses of theory (both stand on ground marked ‘theory’).<sup>232</sup> In this image issues of whether scientific method should be based on theoretical or practical knowledge are combined with the questioning of claims to authority and judgement.

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<sup>230</sup> Op cit., pp. 37-38.

<sup>231</sup> Rudwick *The Great Devonian Controversy* 1985, p. 38.

<sup>232</sup> Rudwick believes that this theoretical figure was meant to represent Charles Lyell, the other figure de la Beche himself (Ibid.). See also Jordanova *Defining Features* 2000, pp. 149-150.

But in addition to the temporary loss of status for a gentleman involved in practical fieldwork, the concentration on a particular site that would inevitably arise with this form of specialist study was also in opposition to his usual role in scientific research. In the 1830s as in the seventeenth-century, a gentleman was expected to take a supervisory overview on a subject, so *managing* knowledge production. By the same principle one could also suggest that the lower class were equally expected to consider the more particular details of a subject, leaving the overview to those of the gentlemanly orders. It is this clash of traditional roles that appears to have caused the controversy in the early nineteenth-century that surrounded a geological map of Britain created by William Smith.

Smith who was an engineer and land-surveyor, responded to a call from the Society of Arts in 1802 to produce a mineralogical map of Britain, and finally published the cartographical results of his study in 1815.<sup>233</sup> The intervening years had meant that Smith had travelled all around Britain, becoming known as ‘Strata Smith’ “...the strangely driven and ever-wandering maker of this map”.<sup>234</sup> But the map did not give its maker the rewards he deserved.<sup>235</sup> Though the creator of the first map of its kind, he was not invited into the Geological Society of London because of his lack of gentlemanly status, and instead his map was effectively copied by the gentleman members of the Society while Smith could take little of the credit – the injustice only being recognised later in the 1860s.<sup>236</sup> In this incident there is a sense that while it was appropriate for a man of such status to do fieldwork, the act of collation, i.e. the drawing of a map was to be left to the gentleman. To travel, to collect together the fragments of information and to view them as a governor-gentleman would, had been Smith’s crime.

Yet this is what the Baconian scientific agenda demanded. Inherent within Bacon’s vision had been the review of social organisation as a whole. In creating the utopia of the *New Atlantis*, which told the story of a society based around a college for scientific research, he had adopted a viewpoint that considered the

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<sup>233</sup> Winchester *The Map that Changed the World* 2001, pp. 199-222.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>235</sup> However he did get his fifty guineas prize money from the Society of Arts (Ibid., p. 221).

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., p. 240.



entirety of human cohesion. Baconian science *was* social management, and the adoption of Bacon's ideas therefore demanded that one considered and reviewed one's own society. At the time of the founding of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) in 1831, George Harvey<sup>237</sup> wrote to John Phillips (William Smith's nephew) who was to be Assistant Secretary of the BAAS in 1832, and later its President. Harvey commented how like the scheme in the *New Atlantis* the new society was, and boldly claimed that "[w]hat Bacon foresaw in distant perspective it has been reserved for our day to realize...".<sup>238</sup> The Baconian precedent had been at the very conception of the new organisation, the Reverend William Harcourt<sup>239</sup> taking the title of the organisation from Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*.<sup>240</sup> At the first meeting of members Harcourt laid down the Baconian agenda of the institution;<sup>241</sup> this being the orchestration of the division of scientific labour through the exchange of knowledge between London and the regions; an aim allowing the gathering of scientific information from the amateur, and also the diffusion of knowledge to a regional audience.<sup>242</sup> That there was a need for an overseeing organisation to collate knowledge was outlined by Thomas L. Donaldson (the architect) in his testimony to the Select Committee. He noted that instruction in science was essential to workmen because experiment

...is a casual knowledge acquired generally by the experiment of many years; whereas, if they were taught this at an earlier period, they would be enabled to avail themselves of that knowledge, and bring it immediately into operation".<sup>243</sup>

This was the very goal of the BAAS and was therefore the adoption of the Baconian viewpoint derived from the traditional authority of a governor-gentleman.

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<sup>237</sup> Taught mathematics at Woolwich Military Academy (Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1982, p. 45, n. 49).

<sup>238</sup> Letter quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>239</sup> General Secretary of the BAAS from 1832-1837 and President in 1839 (*Ibid.*, p. 535).

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 267-268.

<sup>242</sup> Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1982, pp. 96-97 As such the aims of the organisation were aligned to the theories of Francis Bacon, its founders noting that "[w]hat Bacon foresaw in distant perspective it has been reserved for our day to realize..." (p. 97). See also Rudwick *The Great Devonian Controversy* 1985, p. 30.

<sup>243</sup> SC36 q. 344, p. 32.

The close relationship of science to the viewpoint from which to undertake societal design meant that the territory of science was one that attracted a rivalry of approach in the same way as political affiliation.<sup>244</sup> Morrell and Thackray (1982) identify at least five groups during the 1830s, each with alternative scientific agendas though all with the same goal for societal advancement. Of the list two groups provide a particularly strong contrast. These were the members of the Oxford Movement associated with Toryism, and the Philosophical Radicals, both of whom felt that their philosophies were the model for a better society.<sup>245</sup> For the members associated with the Oxford Movement the role of science was in order to demonstrate that God was the overt cause of all things.<sup>246</sup> Their belief in the authorship of God was extended to political views as they mourned the increased detachment of the Church's leadership in the affairs of State. This seemed to have been initiated by the Reform Act and other Radical policies and so in a sense, the scientific, religious and political views of the Oxford Movement are in contrast to those of the Radicals, who challenged their scientifico-religious authority.<sup>247</sup>

It is the Radical alternative to these scientific and political policies that is the focus of this thesis because it is proposed that these theories also provide us with the key to considering a Radical concept of design. In the same way that science was of concern to the Benthamites, so 'design' was an equally important and indeed associated concept; but this was 'design' in its compacted form in which its many associations were combined. The intimate relationship between the model of design for manufacture constructed throughout the Select Committee inquiry and the Benthamite design for society shall be explored in the following chapters. Yet this is not a simple task. As the comments made by Bellenden Ker at the time suggested, the Select Committee was not a smoothly run vehicle for Benthamite 'suscitation'. Rather the proceedings represent an arena (albeit a Radically constructed one) in which the various visions of design were fought

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<sup>244</sup> Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1982, p. 20-21.

<sup>245</sup> The other groups are the natural historians and antiquarians (associated with the British Museum, Linnaean and Zoological Societies), the medical reformers connected to Thomas Wakley, and the 'Cambridge Network' primarily connected to the BAAS (Ibid.).

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Hoppen "The Oxford Movement" 1967, p. 147.



over, and these arguments rely on the precedent of the changes in the perception of society.

This chapter has outlined the complexity of spheres in which a gentleman (and a member of the 1835-6 Select Committee) would have been involved in the 1830s and it is this 'timeline' of theories regarding the changes in the perception of human society that must be highlighted, as it lies at the heart of the 1835-6 debates. This chain of ideas begins with the oscillation between amateur and professional status, in its connection and associations to knowledge, that seemed to come to Britain through the adoption of Baconian scientific method; the legacy of which led to science as a discipline becoming intimately tied to the management of society. Simultaneously new science was practical creating the means by which the changes in structure envisaged for the hierarchical model of human society were brought about. This appeared to create a rivalry as regards the governing viewpoint of society, a philosophical position that the Benthamites in particular embraced. But along with the inheritance from Baconian science came the issue of the status of this viewer of society. Was the role of a governor to be the same as that of a traditional gentleman, or was this too affected by the method inherent in Baconian science?

It will be proposed that the status of the new viewer on society was transformed and that this change was apparent in the relationship of the governor to the origin of society and the natural world, i.e. their view. The question was whether a governor's role entailed him/her to reflect on the creation of human society so as to maintain its order, and thus to ally him/herself with its creator, i.e. God. Or whether the role of a governor was to accept the circumstances of society's creation and to work proactively, acting as its servant and maintaining its continued advancement as a mechanic constructs, maintains and continually upgrades a machine. It is these alternative strategies towards the status and role of a governor that I suggest were played out within the debate regarding design for manufactures during the 1835-6 Select Committee. In effect the questions concerning the role of a designer provided a vocabulary through which to consider these alternative governing methods.

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# **Chapter 2**

## **Proceedings of the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures 1835-6**

In this chapter the proceedings of the Select Committee will be summarised by categorising the variety of debate, collating areas of discussion that are scattered throughout the proceedings but that refer to the same issues. This will provide an outline of what was considered to constitute the mechanisms available for the diffusion of design knowledge. The categories have been identified as follows: museum collection, its contents and its appropriateness as a tool for education, the need for schools of design and the current situation, what design curriculum in schools should be, copyright and the possible methods of imposing it, and the importance of printed material in the diffusion of artistic knowledge. Throughout this chapter the categories of information will be further organised so that in each section there will be an outline of any reports on the contemporary state of provision as the witnesses conceived it. This will be followed by the proposed plans suggested by them in response to the perceived problems they had identified. Inevitably this type of categorisation has required that the Select Committee text be reordered and edited but Appendix 2 provides a précis of witness testimony and may be consulted when reading the current chapter to provide a fuller picture of evidence (there is a fold out index in the back of this thesis).

### **Museums, Galleries and Collections**

It seems appropriate to discuss the category of museums, galleries and collections first, because in discussing this important mechanism for the diffusion of art and design knowledge, the witnesses often described an almost mystical effect on the populace. James Morrison attempted to explain the way that exhibitions were beneficial but could only describe it thus

...such exhibitions produce, perhaps insensibly, very considerable effects; they operate, directly or indirectly on the public mind, and I have no doubt diffuse benefits through all the different grades of society.<sup>1</sup>

John Pye the engraver labelled the results of this influence as producing "...a quiet feeling allied to happiness".<sup>2</sup> John Henning the modeller considered that the museum was not simply of use to the artist or designer and his vision for such a repository was a

...voluntary subscription museum...furnished with models of every description, particularly all mechanism [sic.] of every department of manufactures, every kind of fabric of cloth, plain and ornamented, or coloured, and if possible the mechanism by which it has been done. A museum of this kind... would be of much use in promoting skill in art and design, whether it were the highest branch of art or the more common...in short, in every profession it would be of use that the operator should be able to draw any thing which may occur in his profession...<sup>3</sup>

The existence of an accessible and free museum was given as the reason for differences between the lower class in Britain and other Continental countries, particularly France and Italy. The working populace of these two countries seemed to have an innate love of art,<sup>4</sup> and the picture dealer Samuel Woodburn described how when he had visited the Louvre on a Sunday "...I was very glad to see soldiers and people with their wooden shoes; I thought it a very fine sight; at least it struck me so".<sup>5</sup> Other witnesses also agreed that a visit to the museum seemed to be an occupation for all levels of society in Continental countries as opposed to a pastime for the upper class alone as was the case in Britain.<sup>6</sup>

Part of the argument regarding the accessibility of museums was whether they should be open on a Sunday – a day traditionally reserved for religious worship. The witnesses claimed that a visit to the museum or gallery effectively had the same effect as a visit to church, although they did not go so far as to overtly use this analogy. Charles Harriot Smith noted that being able to see art created an

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<sup>1</sup> SC35 q. 262, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> SC36 q. 1344, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> SC35 q. 865, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas L. Donaldson SC36 q. 363, p. 34; Samuel Woodburn SC36 q. 1752, p. 141.

<sup>5</sup> SC36 q. 1756, p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> James Skene SC35 q. 1197, p. 87; John Bowring SC36 q. 8, p. 2



improvement in the morals of the workers in particular.<sup>7</sup> George Foggo also agreed with this,<sup>8</sup> as did Robert Stothard who claimed that the display of art should be formed “...for the express purpose of occupying the idle hour of the mechanic, rather than allowing him to spend his time, as he does at the present time, in the pot-house”.<sup>9</sup> Only Sir John Dean Paul suggested a problem with the plan to open up museums, gardens, churches and cemeteries. This was that the British were well known for their vandalism of public monuments and thus to make works of art or nature accessible was to risk this type of damage.<sup>10</sup> However Harriot Smith believed that this risk had to be accepted and suggested that works of art had to be widely accessible because “...the best means of serving the industrious class is to increase their means of serving themselves”.<sup>11</sup>

Figure 2.1 The Glyptoteck , Munich. Leo Von Klenze 1816-30.

Samuel Woodburn gave much of his evidence in relation to Continental Galleries and collections ranging from Petersburg to the Louvre, knowledge that derived from his work as a picture dealer. Of these venues he considered the Louvre Museum in Paris to be the best organised and arranged, while the collection in Madrid at the Prado Palace possessed the finest collection of art.<sup>12</sup> A professional artist James Mathews Leigh suggested that it was the Louvre that possessed an excellent collection while the Madrid institution had a bold arrangement, but not

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<sup>7</sup> SC36 q. 654-5, p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> SC35 q. 731, p. 51.

<sup>9</sup> SC36 q. 248, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> SC36 qq. 2089-2092, p. 175.

<sup>11</sup> SC35 q. 663, p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> SC36 q. 1686, p. 136.

one that should be copied by the British.<sup>13</sup> The Florentine collection and the Pope's gallery of works were considered very good by Woodburn, and the witness commented that "...every government in Italy has a fine collection".<sup>14</sup> George Stanley another picture dealer, identified the Louvre as the best-arranged gallery but claimed that he had not seen the new gallery in Munich, an institution he had heard much about (Figure 2.1).<sup>15</sup> The architect of that gallery<sup>16</sup> Baron Von Klenze, gave evidence on his method and design of the collection's arrangement:

...I thought it right to follow the historical plan. I began with the Egyptian the first, because the Greek art sprang from the Egyptian. Then after the Egyptian room, the hall for the ancient Greek or Archaic [sic.] sculpture, which is the second room. The third rooms for the most beautiful Greek epochs; after that there are three rooms, in which there are no statues, but they are richly painted in fresco, representing the history of the ancient gods and heroes, to refresh the eye after having seen the statues, by the sight of colours again. After those rooms begins the second gallery of sculpture; it begins with a room in which there are Heroes and other celebrated persons. Here we begin the Roman art: two very large rooms contain the Roman art. Then we come to the last room, in which are placed some modern statues, since the "*renaissance*" to our times, in order to show how ancient art has entered into modern art.<sup>17</sup>

This rigorous and considered approach to arrangement and collection seemed a world away from the newly proposed National Gallery, which by comparison appeared small with a very poor collection (damaged and possibly fake<sup>18</sup>) that was haphazardly composed. Figure 2.2 shows an example of the general consensus towards the scale and ambitions of the National Gallery collection in London.<sup>19</sup> Though this image shows the old National Gallery in Pall Mall, the hopes for the new one did not seem to rate much better. Indeed the Radicals did not appear to consider the new building to provide much more space or imbue a National collection with any more grandeur, and they (particularly Ewart) questioned the architect of the new National Gallery William Wilkins at length (see Figure 2.3 overleaf).

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<sup>13</sup> SC36 qq. 1890-1891, p. 150.

<sup>14</sup> SC36 q. 1691, p. 137.

<sup>15</sup> SC36 q. 1766, p. 141.

<sup>16</sup> The Glyptothek in Munich (Summerson *The Classical Language of Architecture* 1985, p. 117).

<sup>17</sup> SC36 q. 2281, pp. 195-196.

<sup>18</sup> SC36 qq. 1725-1731, p. 139.

<sup>19</sup> Klonk "The National Gallery in London" in *Consumers and Luxury* 1999, p. 233.



Figure 2.2 Contrast between Louvre and 100 Pall Mall the National Gallery in London, Charles Joseph Hullmandel, c.1830.

Wilkins was asked about the arrangement of pictures and particularly about how they had been organised in relation to the new methods coming from Munich. Wilkins claimed to have left the task of considering how the paintings were to be arranged to the trustees of the new institution.<sup>20</sup> But when the architect was asked a second time in later evidence whether he approved of the new gallery at Munich, Wilkins answered in the negative, and finally conceded that he had planned the organisation of the paintings, when he designed the National Gallery.<sup>21</sup> The witness explained that he had envisaged rooms where two schools could be viewed so that a student could

...compare a Venetian with a Roman picture, so as to see at once the excellencies of both, and wherein they differ, and enable the student to appreciate, by contrast, the drawing of the one and the colouring of the other.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> SC36 q. 1204, p. 101.

<sup>21</sup> SC36 p. 1435, p. 125.

<sup>22</sup> SC36 q. 1436, pp. 125-126.

This was a system of organisation slightly at variance to that suggested by Mathews Leigh. He proposed that there were only two ways of displaying art, one by organisation through dating, the other by grouping in the schools that they had belonged to. The witness commented further that it was not a good system to put unrelated schools side by side.<sup>23</sup> But all this discussion on how a collection should be rearranged seemed futile when the National collection itself was still so relatively small. This was a point put by its keeper William Segulier.<sup>24</sup>

Figure 2.3 National Gallery by William Wilkins 1832-1838.

Samuel Woodburn explained that when he had suggested a more ambitious scheme that would be akin to the Louvre, he was not taken seriously.<sup>25</sup> As has been noted in Chapter 1, the Radicals believed that the governing of these museums in Britain had been monopolised by amateur gentlemen. The Radicals therefore questioned witnesses regarding the management of Continental museums. Edward Solly explained that the Committee for the Berlin Museum had

...an annual sum entrusted to them for the purpose of purchasing pictures, and this committee consists of persons who have made it their study to attain a knowledge of pictures.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> SC35 q. 1896, p. 150.

<sup>24</sup> SC36 q. 1594, p. 132.

<sup>25</sup> Woodburn proposed rebuilding Buckingham House and St. James's Palace and the creation of a connecting gallery between the two running across Green Park (SC36 q. 1709, p. 138).

<sup>26</sup> SC36 q. 1830, p. 146.



A similar Committee existed in Paris according to the same witness and both of these management groups were made up of “...experts”.<sup>27</sup> This differed from British ideas of gallery management. To emphasise how problematic this was, Gustave Waagen explained the relationship between the mechanics of the selection process and the creation of the most effective viewing experience:

To arrange a public collection, it should be so formed as to combine taste with instruction; both are attained by an historical arrangement; such an arrangement, by following the spirit of the times and the genius of the artists, would produce an harmonious influence upon the mind of the spectator. The spectator would also, when he goes to the gallery, see the historical development of the art.<sup>28</sup>

George Foggo also noted that if a gallery was not successfully organised then it would confuse the viewer, which would result in “...a very imperfect knowledge of the history of arts and commerce, their effects on each other and on the state of the nations, and thence false theories”.<sup>29</sup> Successful management therefore seemed to be a moral issue.

Within Britain another major example discussed in the Select Committee was the British Museum and in particular access to the Elgin Marbles (see Figure 1.6 in Chapter 1).<sup>30</sup> John Henning noted how he had had to apply to see the Marbles and that this was by the approval of a Royal Academician who had rather insultingly initially commented that “[t]o allow Mr. Henning to draw from the marbles would be like sending a boy to the university before he had learned his letters”.<sup>31</sup> The influence of the Royal Academy was also a circumstance noted by George Foggo who explained that to see the cartoons of Raphael at Hampton Court was even more difficult.<sup>32</sup> William Wyon suggested that any obstacle no matter how apparently slight was enough to put many people off going to a museum.<sup>33</sup> Problems in viewing art treasures were also identified by Sir John

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<sup>27</sup> SC36 q. 1833, p. 146.

<sup>28</sup> SC35 q. 86, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> SC35 q. 729, p. 50.

<sup>30</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, pp. 76-79.

<sup>31</sup> SC35 q. 868, p. 60.

<sup>32</sup> SC36 q. 1375, pp. 119-120.

<sup>33</sup> This was that a visitor had to sign their name before entering the British Museum, this ‘impediment’ was removed resulting in an increase in attendance (SC35 q. 1695, p. 128).

Dean Paul who noted that though he considered the British Museum to be open sufficiently, something more was needed. He suggested that

[i]t strikes me, if there were professors who had classes, and who could read lectures on these things to a class of students in the British Museum, with these fine models before them, it would be of great use.

Other witnesses also considered that the combination of a school and a collection would prove particularly successful in diffusing a knowledge of art.<sup>34</sup> John Martin suggested that "...in the British Museum every thing requisite [is] on the spot, and few alterations in the establishment is [sic.] needed. The National Gallery, and the National Gallery of Practical Science, might become branches of the British Museum".<sup>35</sup> William Wyon also suggested that a museum could be equally effective as a method of diffusing a knowledge of art.<sup>36</sup> In relation to this, George Foggo commented that the contents of a museum could also reflect the needs of a particular area such as a mineralogy collection that may be useful to one town and not another.<sup>37</sup> He suggested that these museums should be governed centrally.<sup>38</sup> In Scotland the conjunction of the Royal Institution and the Board of Trustees in Edinburgh combined a design school and a collection that included a gallery of casts (including the Elgin Marbles and other casts made from buildings in Greece) acquired from Lord Elgin.<sup>39</sup> George Rennie suggested that the British Museum with its fine collection of sculpture should become a depot for providing casts to provincial towns.<sup>40</sup> Philip Barnes the architect noted that this had happened in Norwich where the Society of Arts there had provided £100 in order to purchase some casts.<sup>41</sup> John B. Papworth suggested that museums should also have collections that included ornamental design such as vases, casts, bronzes and architecture.<sup>42</sup> Robert Butt also suggested what type of contents should be in a local museum explaining that

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<sup>34</sup> For example Robert Butt SC35 q. 586, p. 40; John Martin SC35 q. 911, p. 64.

<sup>35</sup> SC35 q. 924, p. 64.

<sup>36</sup> SC35 q. 1708, p. 129.

<sup>37</sup> SC35 q. 730, pp. 50-51.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> James Skene qq. 1181-1182, p. 86.

<sup>40</sup> SC35 q. 959, p. 68.

<sup>41</sup> SC35 q. 1324, p. 96.

<sup>42</sup> SC35 q. 1286, p. 93.



...every school ought to have a museum, the expense of the formation of which would not be great, for casts from the antique statues, busts, vases, candelabra, gems, coins...there can be no doubt that it would be of the greatest benefit to the manufacturers of this country by improving the taste of minor artists and workman.<sup>43</sup>

This type of collection James Skene suggested must be actively coconstructed in relation to manufactures.<sup>44</sup>

There were other institutions discussed by Thomas Hofland, which had in effect attempted to address some of these problems with display. Hofland described the formation and purpose of the British Institution and the Society of Painters in Water Colours. The British Institution he explained was established to aid the younger artists in their careers so that they could sell their work, the only other venue for display being the Royal Academy.<sup>45</sup> The other venue was the Water Colour society, which had also been established to provide more exhibition opportunities for a particularly British art medium. This was in opposition to the monopoly of the Royal Academy.<sup>46</sup> The monopoly of the Royal Academy in teaching was another detailed area of argument, and this leads onto the next section – the Schools of Design.

## Schools of Design

The first witness Gustave Friedrick Waagen described the provision for the teaching of design in Berlin, Breslau, Königsberg and Cologne at the *Gewerbe-Schools*. Waagen explained that the Gewerb-Institut had collections of the newest technical inventions and objects of manufacture as well as more traditional fine art objects such as Classical sculpture.<sup>47</sup> This provided a basic education and students who showed themselves to be talented entered the Berlin Academy of Arts for which there was no charge, or they took a course at the University.<sup>48</sup> Continuing the evidence regarding Continental design, John Bowring explained that there were around eighty recognised schools of art in France, one in

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<sup>43</sup> SC35 q. 589, p. 41.

<sup>44</sup> SC35 qq. 1181-1183, p. 86.

<sup>45</sup> SC36 q. 1296, p. 109.

<sup>46</sup> SC36 q. 1297, p. 109.

<sup>47</sup> SC35 qq. 7-14, pp. 1-2.

<sup>48</sup> SC35 q. 72, p. 4.

particular that was connected intimately with manufactures was the School of Art at Lyons.<sup>49</sup> He explained the curriculum of this institution in detail. Bowring outlined the six departments 1. Painting (from life model, from casts or still life, instruction through the principles of painting); 2. architecture (composition and ornament); 3. Ornament and *mise en carte*; 4. A botanical department (oil painting and water colour); 5. sculpture (ordinary and ornamental); and 6. Engraving. Bowring also explained that the school had a botanical garden, anatomy provision, a library, a cabinet of natural history and a display of prize-winning student work. The institution had a large museum that it also opened to the public.<sup>50</sup> In addition Bowring reported on the School of Art in Geneva, an institution that he had recently visited. The Swiss school was particularly focussed on watch making and jewellery and the witness similarly described the curriculum of this institution. The course he explained was over three years and was based on scientific principles in particular, such as algebra, plane geometry, trigonometry, statistics and hydrodynamics.<sup>51</sup> Bowring suggested that the average student in this institution was able to read and write, was practical yet knowledgeable and always wanted to know more.<sup>52</sup>

James Skene described the provision available in Scotland for the manufacturers, a subject that he was intimately connected with being the secretary for the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures in Scotland. The School belonging to this organisation was one of a series of societies that were housed in the Royal Institution and had been established in response to the founders' observation that education was providing an advantage to foreign manufacturers.<sup>53</sup> Skene also described another school for the teaching of drawing for the textile industry in Dumfermline.<sup>54</sup> In Norwich the Society of Arts had had a school for teaching drawing since 1805 but it was not officially connected with manufactures.<sup>55</sup> Philip Barnes suggested however that the school created a general improvement in "...promoting [a student's]... taste and knowledge in the

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<sup>49</sup> SC36 q. 10, p. 2; q. 9, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> SC36 qq. 13-16, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> SC36 q. 43, pp. 6-7.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> SC35 q. 1105, pp. 78-79.

<sup>54</sup> SC35 q. 1114, p. 79.

<sup>55</sup> Philip Barnes SC35 q. 1323, p. 96.



fine arts and in the art of design”, which he considered indirectly helped the cause of manufacture.<sup>56</sup>

Charles Toplis outlined the teaching in Mechanics’ Institutes in London. He noted that these institutions were inherently allied to the manufacturing class because some of them had been generated by the working class themselves.<sup>57</sup> He explains:

Our engineers, our smiths, our carpenters, our draughtsmen find no assistance in the dead languages; they covet to know the principles of science which may guide and correct their judgment, and to possess the elements of art, which may shorten their labour, and give the stamp of master ship to their works. In pursuing the course pointed out by the experience of their own wants, they have founded for their own use lectures, schools and museums, to teach them the principles and facts of mechanical and chemical philosophy, and to initiate them into the practice of the arts of design.<sup>58</sup>

The Mechanics’ Institute in London offered teaching in design that was so popular that they had to ask the students to leave the classes after they had taken five.<sup>59</sup> This teaching covered practical geometry, drawing (architectural, mechanical, perspective and ornamental), drawing the human figure, modelling and landscape drawing.<sup>60</sup> Birmingham Mechanics’ Institute and Society of Arts also provided teaching in drawing classes, however William Wyon suggested that this teaching was aimed at encouraging fine art and not “...that species of decorative design required in the manufactures of the town”.<sup>61</sup>

The factory inspector Thomas Jones Howell noted that in Coventry two societies – the Mechanics’ Institute and the Society for Promoting Religious Useful Knowledge encouraged the teaching of good design. The witness noted that these institutions encouraged Draft Drawing, i.e. the process of translating designs onto lined paper (*mise en carte*).<sup>62</sup> In contrast to this George Eld the mayor of

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<sup>56</sup> SC35 q. 1337, p. 96.

<sup>57</sup> SC35 q. 1553, p. 113.

<sup>58</sup> SC35 q. 1554, p. 114.

<sup>59</sup> SC35 q. 1556, p. 115.

<sup>60</sup> Appendix No. 3 from 1835 Select Committee, p. 146.

<sup>61</sup> SC35 q. 1672, p. 127.

<sup>62</sup> SC36 q.128, p. 15.

Coventry suggested that there was no teaching available in design in the most crucial area of Foleshill, which was the centre of the ribbon producing trade.<sup>63</sup> To add to this negative situation the witness explained that neither in Foleshill or Coventry was there any museum or gallery either relating to fine art or to manufactures.<sup>64</sup> John Jobson Smith explained that the Mechanics' Institute in Sheffield did not provide any design education, although the institution did have a small collection of works.<sup>65</sup>

Some firms also had their own design schools such as the Birmingham japanning firm Jennens and Bettridge, a company represented by Samuel Wiley.<sup>66</sup> Shirley Spaulding De Voe (1971) notes that the firm was particularly concerned with maintaining standards of decoration and employed artists to teach their apprentices.<sup>67</sup> Jones Howell explained that Mathew Boulton had also had a school of design in his Soho factory in Birmingham.<sup>68</sup> This had taught artists of the stature of John Flaxman and George Wyon who had both "...emanated from the school at Soho".<sup>69</sup> Willlliam Wyon complimented the firm Rundell and Bridge on their foresight for employing excellent artists such as John Flaxman.<sup>70</sup> This the firm did in response to the general poor quality of trade and in a manuscript (housed in the National Art Gallery at the Victoria and Albert museum) describing Rundell and Bridge's rise and fall, it is noted that:

...a very bad taste in manufacture of Plate had for many years prior to this prevailed in London in fact from the time of Queen Anne up to that period the plate made every year was if possible in worse style and taste than that what was made in the previous year. This was seen and felt by Rundell and Bridge and must to their credit they immediately set about remedying this disgraceful state of things by the Establishment of a Manufactory at Greenwich on a large and liberal plan by offering great encouragement to workmen of the best ability and by liberally rewarding first rate Artists for designs in almost every description...<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> SC35 q. 488, p. 35.

<sup>64</sup> SC35 qq. 508-512, p. 96.

<sup>65</sup> SC36 q. 132, p. 11.

<sup>66</sup> SC35 q. 751, p. 52.

<sup>67</sup> DeVoe *English Papier Mâché* 1971, p. 43.

<sup>68</sup> SC36 q. 122, p. 14.

<sup>69</sup> SC36 q. 123, p. 14.

<sup>70</sup> SC35 q. 1752, p. 132.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.



This was not the case in every manufactory however, for example even the best carpet manufacturers in Kidderminster did not attempt to acquire good designs, but measured the firms' success on economics and aimed for the cheapest patterns.<sup>72</sup> Jones Howell explained that there was no design school in Kidderminster or Wolverhampton.<sup>73</sup>

The most famous institution to teach in Britain was however the Royal Academy and there was much comment on its methods. Robert Stothard noted that it was an institution for those who were to become professional fine artists.<sup>74</sup> The institution offered lectures to its students covering the subjects anatomy, perspective, architecture, sculpture and painting, although according to George Rennie these were delivered only intermittently and in particular the lectures on perspective were not delivered between 1824 and 1831.<sup>75</sup> Thomas Donaldson the architect agreed with this perception of the teaching and noted that the architecture lectures, though they had been useful did not take place over a long period of time. He also explained that the lectures that were delivered on perspective were "...entirely useless" because they were instructed without use of visual aids.<sup>76</sup>

The Royal Academy was also criticised for its apparent emphasis on the lesser branch of portrait painting as opposed to the more important "...historical and poetical works".<sup>77</sup> This was a point also noted by John Martin who claimed that the preoccupation with portraiture smacked of the love of profit rather than the higher aims of art.<sup>78</sup> John Burnet the engraver explained how the higher art of history painting was materially affected by the size of the premises of the Royal Academy in Somerset House. This was relatively small and therefore limited the ambitions of artists who were disadvantaged compared to their Continental equivalents, so preventing the production of historical art which tended to be

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<sup>72</sup> Robert Stothard SC36 q. 258, p. 25.

<sup>73</sup> SC36 q. 141, pp. 15-16.

<sup>74</sup> SC36 q. 250, p. 25.

<sup>75</sup> SC36 qq. 665-666, p. 58.

<sup>76</sup> SC36 q. 1236, p. 103.

<sup>77</sup> Frederick Hurleston (phrasing of the questioner) SC36 q. 744, p. 65.

<sup>78</sup> SC36 q. 830, p. 72.

produced on a larger scale.<sup>79</sup> As far as the actual teaching was concerned, Haydon commented that the roles of the teachers were rotated. This resulted in “...an academician who is an historical painter, instructs them this month, then comes a landscape painter to instruct them the next month...”.<sup>80</sup> This witness also claimed that the anatomical teaching was not done as efficiently as it could have been because the Royal Academicians had appointed an inferior anatomist.<sup>81</sup>

James Morrison explained that like other fine art institutions the focus of teaching at the Royal Academy was on learning how to represent the human figure. He considered this to be a curriculum more designed for training “...people for painters and sculptors, rather than as artists for manufacture”.<sup>82</sup> This criticism introduces one of the main areas of discussion during the Select Committee - this was the ideal curriculum for a school of design.

The first area of education where this was discussed was in elementary education, which was thought by many to be the first stage of design education. Gustave Waagen noted that this was the teaching available in Germany and helped the cause of students going into more advanced education.<sup>83</sup> Robert Butt noted that elementary education would prevent the great expense of the traditional artistic education for young people that usually involved learning from a private tutor before going to the Royal Academy school.<sup>84</sup> John Henning also suggested the importance of elementary education but one in which the theoretical aspects of designing, i.e. drawing and the practical application of it to a particular practice, e.g. weaving must be combined.<sup>85</sup> For the chief engraver at the Royal Mint William Wyon, a general education at elementary level would provide a better diffusion of taste and knowledge amongst all classes, even if the students did not practically apply their learning or go on to pursue design related

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<sup>79</sup> SC36 q. 935, p. 80.

<sup>80</sup> SC36 q. 1058, p. 89.

<sup>81</sup> SC36 q. 1069, p. 91.

<sup>82</sup> SC35 q. 170, pp. 13-14.

<sup>83</sup> SC35 q. 54, p. 3.

<sup>84</sup> SC35 q. 585, p. 40.

<sup>85</sup> SC35 q. 867, p. 60.



employment.<sup>86</sup> Thomas Donaldson similarly considered that if the working class were taught the basics of art at an elementary level, then “...they would be enabled to avail themselves of that knowledge, and bring it immediately into operation”.<sup>87</sup> Ultimately Wyon lamented that “[i]t has often been a source of very great regret to me, that at our universities and at other public seminaries, the arts of design are not considered as an essential part of education”.<sup>88</sup>

Within an actual school for manufacturing design there were many suggestions as to what would make the ideal curriculum. Robert Harrison of the firm Brydges, Campbell & Harrison demanded that the key to a good design institution was one in which the teaching was practical. He suggested of the French system of weaving: “I think their superiority arises from the circumstances of their having a knowledge of weaving as well as a power of designing”.<sup>89</sup> James Morrison was asked whether he considered that it was important for a student to be trained in modelling as well as drawing. Morrison considered that this was essential and explained that the new Institute of British Architects were hoping to offer such instruction.<sup>90</sup> George Eld also suggested that a school for the teaching of design in manufacture had to be more than a “...mere drawing school”, which would be “...of very little use”.<sup>91</sup> Monsieur Claude Guillotte commented that if a student was going to be an effective designer in weave then s/he must learn the process of *mise en carte*.<sup>92</sup> Samuel Wiley suggests this practical education could be achieved, as it had been in the company Jennens and Bettridge where a young student was first taught drawing and then would move into the firm (aged around fourteen) to learn the practical application of those skills. This could become a national system explained the witness where all drawing education would be given in London and then students would move around the country to learn in practice within different companies.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> SC35 qq. 1713-1716, p. 129.

<sup>87</sup> SC36 q. 344, p. 32.

<sup>88</sup> SC35 q. 1721, p. 130.

<sup>89</sup> SC35 q. 465, p. 34.

<sup>90</sup> SC35 q. 263, pp. 20-21.

<sup>91</sup> SC35 q. 500, p. 36.

<sup>92</sup> SC35 q. 846, p. 58.

<sup>93</sup> SC35 qq. 805-807, p. 54.

Other witnesses considered more specific aspects of an ideal curriculum. For example several considered that chemical knowledge was an essential acquisition for any student who would be dealing with dyes and colouring in manufacture. Again the French system was used as an example of good practice.<sup>94</sup> Charles Harriot Smith specified that for the architectural modellers, the curriculum for students should include some education in the Gothic or English style of carving, which he claimed was very deficient.<sup>95</sup> In contrast to this he noted that generally the Classical styles was more understood by workers, who could reproduce the more 'mechanical' style of ornament such as Corinthian capitals.<sup>96</sup> George Foggo believed that the basics of an artistic education should not be ignored such as perspective, anatomical study, proportion and botany. This he claimed was "...almost as necessary for a people to possess a knowledge of those points as to know how to write".<sup>97</sup> He also suggested that good art historical lectures should be provided for any prospective students.<sup>98</sup> For manufactures, George Rennie considered it was essential that a student should have a good education in anatomy and perspective in particular, as well as botanical drawing.<sup>99</sup> This was a curriculum also suggested by James Crabb a wallpaper designer who particularly emphasised botanical instruction suggesting that

...a botanical garden would be of the highest value; for there is scarcely any thing where, in some form, botany is not introduced, and the more extensively you are acquainted with it the better...<sup>100</sup>

Similarly the lace manufacturer John Millward believed that drawing was particularly important for the education of lace workers, particularly drawing that was centred on botanical drawing.<sup>101</sup> Noel St. Leon and David Ramsey Hay also considered that botanical study was essential.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Benjamin Spalding *SC35* qq. 310-311, p. 24; James Morrison *SC35* qq. 219-221, p. 17.

<sup>95</sup> *SC35* q. 649, p. 44.

<sup>96</sup> *SC35* qq. 649-652, p. 44.

<sup>97</sup> *SC35* q. 728, p. 50.

<sup>98</sup> *SC35* q. 729, p. 50.

<sup>99</sup> *SC35* q. 957, p. 68.

<sup>100</sup> *SC35* q. 1078, p. 75.

<sup>101</sup> *SC36* q. 190, p. 19.

<sup>102</sup> Noel St. Leon *SC36* q. 378, p. 36, and David Ramsey Hay *SC36* q. 430, p. 39.



For James Skene the first class in any institution must be one offering drawing from a life model, this was in order to get a clear understanding of anatomy. From here the students could branch out and study different manufactures or architecture, but always having undergone the core study.<sup>103</sup> Anatomy was one of the fundamental principles of the "...correctness of design" of which the witness also listed botany, chemistry, colouring and optics.<sup>104</sup> The ideal curriculum for manufacturers for Charles Toplis would include elementary science, design, construction and workmanship as well as skills "...subservient to the luxuries" such as the "delineation of landscape, and even...the drawing and modelling of the human form".<sup>105</sup> John Burnet also considered that anatomy and botany were essential, even for the education of mechanics.<sup>106</sup>

Henry Sass, being an art teacher, had many views on the ideal curriculum for a design school. Like George Foggo he considered that the basis for the education of the arts of design should be in learning "...the delineation of objects" through the principles of "...geometry, optics and perspective".<sup>107</sup> Of major importance for this witness was the art of perspective, which he believed was crucial to any study that the aspiring student was to undertake. He claimed that perspective was

...the art of seeing with your own eyes; the art of perspective supplies us with the infallible mode of ascertaining and representing the true appearance of objects, provided the points of sight and distance are judiciously chosen, according to the nature of the subject and scene.<sup>108</sup>

The importance of perspective was also suggested by Thomas Donaldson who was the secretary for the Institute of British Architects.<sup>109</sup> But the most detailed instruction as regards geometry was the evidence given by Richard Ramsey Reinagle, who provided a series of outline drawings that he considered to be the geometrical principles behind the visual appearance of nature and Classical design.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> SC35 q. 1129, p. 81.

<sup>104</sup> SC35 q. 1130, p. 81.

<sup>105</sup> SC35 q. 1566, p. 116.

<sup>106</sup> SC36 q. 955, p. 82.

<sup>107</sup> SC36 qq. 208-209, p. 21.

<sup>108</sup> SC36 q. 210, p. 21.

<sup>109</sup> SC36 q. 337, p. 32.

<sup>110</sup> SC36 q. 605, pp. 51-52.

In a sense Sass and Donaldson's comments referred to what Robert Stothard referred to in terms of the mechanism of the ideal curriculum. For this witness it was particularly important to "...develop the power of that which may be called the instruments, the eye and the hand, and you would leave the exercise of the imagination to the full maturity of mental powers".<sup>111</sup> This was something that did not happen often because it was more usual for teaching to be based on "...erroneous principles" where "[f]or instance, landscape, which is ideal art, is taught before the mind is correctly imbued with the first principles of outline, light and shadow; and colour...".<sup>112</sup>

Some witnesses went into more depth about the management of the ideal design school and this was a subject that was particularly important to George Rennie. He was very concerned that design schools should not be controlled by Government because this would result in "...too much interference... or too much legislation... on the part of artists, as generally happens in the case of a constituted academy, naturally tends to create mannerism in art".<sup>113</sup>

## Copyright

John Bowring provided the most extensive account of copyright practice, and as with his evidence regarding schools of design, this was based on his investigations in France. Bowring highlighted the importance placed on copyright by the French, and explained that the rules governing it were very extensive.<sup>114</sup> The witness discussed the vocabulary of the French system – *propriété*, which referred to the actual pattern (the property of the manufacturer); *contrefaçon* was the act of forgery, making the individual who committed the act a *contrefaiteur* or forger.<sup>115</sup> Bowring explained that the French Penal code had specific guidelines for fining those copying designs, as well as those selling copies. The group judging the design had the authority to confiscate machinery, plates and moulds. Special tribunals were established when the earlier system

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<sup>111</sup> SC36 q. 282, p. 27.

<sup>112</sup> SC36 q. 289, p. 27.

<sup>113</sup> SC36 q. 639, p. 56.

<sup>114</sup> SC36 q. 46, p. 7.

<sup>115</sup> SC36 q. 47, p. 7.



was seen as being too inefficient and this board was termed the *Conseil de Prud'hommes* which consisted of manufacturers and workmen, knowledgeable about the design process.<sup>116</sup>

The tribunal stored three types of manufacturing property. These were patents, 'marks' (i.e. an identifying mark) and patterns. The *Conseil de Prud'hommes* could therefore be applied to in order to appeal in any of these cases, although the decision did not take any legal effect until the particular category of item that was to be copyrighted was included in the *Bulletin des Lois*. As well as powers to fine, the *contrafaitueur* was also required to pay a quarter of it to the poor of the district.<sup>117</sup> Bowring listed the trades that were governed by the copyright laws and these covered almost every trade from silk weaving to chocolate making.<sup>118</sup>

This well organised system was in great contrast to the laws governing the protection of patterns in Britain. The need for copyright was considered to be as important as the provision of design education. After all, suggested many of the witnesses, what would be the point of teaching students to be successful designers if their designs could be easily copied?<sup>119</sup> James Morrison considered that the lack of copyright alone was enough to create "...an immense check to the progress of the arts of design".<sup>120</sup> It was for this reason that good designers did not want to go into design for manufactures because they saw their work as futile since it could so easily be copied.<sup>121</sup> This was also the view of John B. Papworth who similarly considered that a student would not be interested in becoming a designer because "...he shall not be remunerated because ornamental art is not adequately protected...".<sup>122</sup> In Britain, there was no extensive system of copyright indeed the only parts of a design that could be copied were figurative (whether animal or human).<sup>123</sup> Robert Butt suggested that there was virtually no protection for more figurative work, although there was a category of protection

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> SC36 qq. 53-57, pp. 8-9.

<sup>118</sup> SC36 q. 48, pp. 7-8.

<sup>119</sup> See for example the evidence of George Eld SC35 q. 531, p. 37 and James Skene SC35 q. 1147, p. 82.

<sup>120</sup> SC35 q. 208, p. 16.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> SC35 q. 1231, p. 89.

<sup>123</sup> Robert Butt SC35 q. 595, p. 41.

that covered work described as that which had resulted from "...invention in sculpture".<sup>124</sup> This, the witness suggested, was a very difficult category because it was virtually impossible to define what was exactly meant by the term 'invention'.<sup>125</sup> Charles Harriot Smith also considered that although this phrase could be applied to "...all classes of sculpture" he believed that "...the chance of recovering is too doubtful and expensive".<sup>126</sup>

The problem with gaining copyright in sculptural forms was also discussed by John Jobson Smith who was a partner of the Sheffield iron manufacturers Stewart, Smith and Company. Smith explained that although copyright could be gained for a paper design, once the design was made in three-dimensions the copyright was not applicable.<sup>127</sup> Jobson Smith noted how problematic this lack of copyright in three-dimensions could be. He explained "...we have sent out such a thing as that on Monday morning, and it has been to Manchester, back again to Sheffield, and copied and returned to Manchester before Saturday night".<sup>128</sup> As well as paper designs, printed patterns were also subject to copyright laws. However Thomas James wanted woven textiles to be similarly protected.<sup>129</sup>

Jobson Smith suggested that there should be a central register for the registration of patterns and that this could either be at the National Gallery or Somerset House. The manufacturer explained that the object would need to be left at the central board for a set period ready for the judging of its originality.<sup>130</sup> This storehouse should also be open to the public.<sup>131</sup> Jobson Smith estimated that the length of time that designs should be registered was for around three or four years and that each design would require some type of copyright mark such as a royal cipher or a crown.<sup>132</sup> Thomas Howell suggested that copyright could be shown by stamping the end of the printed run of fabric.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> SC35 q. 680, p. 46.

<sup>127</sup> SC35 q. 117, p. 10.

<sup>128</sup> SC35 q. 105, p. 10.

<sup>129</sup> SC35 q. 343, p. 26.

<sup>130</sup> SC35 q. 111, p. 10.

<sup>131</sup> SC35 q. 108, p. 10.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> SC35 q. 440, p. 32.



Jobson Smith was also asked about the problem of defining originality, but the witness seemed confident that a distinct pattern would have "...so much the particular mind and style of the artist, as to fairly constitute an original".<sup>134</sup> Morrison suggested that the length of time over which the protection was active would vary with the product. This could be anything from six months to three years.<sup>135</sup> Thomas Field Gibson did not consider that six months was enough. He suggested that a period over twelve months would be necessary because sometimes manufacturers asked for a repeat of a pattern even though the 'season' had changed.

Robert Butt had considered a detailed model for the management of copyright. He suggested that there should be repositories of patterns for copyright in all major cities in Britain (he numbered 124 in all). Here artists and manufacturers could deposit their original designs along with a declaration that this was indeed their own work. The work would then be stamped with a small set of figures indicating different aspects of the circumstances of production, for example, a letter could be used to indicate the origin of the design, e.g. A for London, B for Manchester or C for Birmingham. The witnesses suggested that other circumstances of production could be registered using Roman numerals.<sup>136</sup>

George Foggo (who was a historical painter) believed that the French were so superior in manufacture because of their excellent system of copyright.<sup>137</sup> He had also considered a possible system of copyright, which he explained should be cheap because at present in Britain any attempt to claim copyright cost the manufacturer far more than the rewards of winning a case. As such, there seemed to be no point in enforcing the copyright law.<sup>138</sup> This was the opposite in France where the system was cheaper to use but the rewards were higher if a case was won.<sup>139</sup> Foggo was asked about who would be on the panel for judging the originality of designs. He explained a jury should be knowledgeable about art

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<sup>134</sup> SC35 q. 158, p. 13.

<sup>135</sup> SC35 q. 210, pp. 16-17.

<sup>136</sup> SC35 qq. 606-607, p. 42.

<sup>137</sup> SC35 qq. 685-686, p.

<sup>138</sup> SC35 q. 691, p. 47.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

although he did not think that it was right that a jury should solely consist of artists.<sup>140</sup> The panel would judge whether a pattern demanded a particular length of copyright time and he considered that this could be anything from six months to fifty years.<sup>141</sup> Of particular concern was that casts in plaster should be protected because these were most likely and easily copied.<sup>142</sup> John Henning Senior also considered that the position of modellers who used casts was very precarious. He explained that "...as soon as the casts are issued, whoever lays their hands on them may, with very little trouble, take moulds in sulphur, wax or plaster, and multiply them to any number".<sup>143</sup>

John Martin, the artist, had been the victim of the lack of copyright laws. His engravings had been copied and the cost of bringing a prosecution against the plagiarist was so great and the rewards so small that he considered it to be an unfeasible task. The artist was very bitter about the lack of laws and appealed for some help with such an unfair situation as one in which a plagiarist "...robs me of my ideas, but establishes a lucrative trade on the effects of my pecuniary outlay...".<sup>144</sup> The witness did however have a suggestion for solving the present copyright problem. He proposed that a

...committee of gentlemen and artists might be appointed to sit at the museum about once in the fortnight or month; say in the following towns, namely for England, London, Bath, Liverpool, Birmingham....<sup>145</sup>

In these meetings the originality of patterns would be discussed and the patterns stored in places such as the British Museum.<sup>146</sup>

Another witness George Rennie had similar ideas to the painter John Martin. He suggested that there should be a main depot for patterns that would be registered there – this should be in London. Other branch boards would exist in principal manufacturing towns such as Birmingham and Manchester. When applied to,

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<sup>140</sup> SC35 q. 696b, p. 48.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> SC35 q. 696b, p. 48.

<sup>143</sup> SC35 q. 853, p. 59.

<sup>144</sup> SC35 q. 946, pp. 66-67.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.



these boards would consult with the central depot in order to judge the case that was being put to them.<sup>147</sup> The witness's system suggested problems with communications between the boards. How would a pattern deposited in Manchester be recorded in London, and vice versa? This issue was discussed but not resolved.<sup>148</sup>

Charles Toplis noted that the lack of copyright was a major concern to manufacturers. Indeed it proved so difficult to keep a pattern the sole property of the firm that produced it, manufacturers considered that getting a superior designer to create their products was futile and a wasted expense.<sup>149</sup> The main issue for Toplis was the difficulty in defining what exactly was unique about a pattern. He noted that a plagiarist could "...so easily, by an alteration of subordinate parts, retain the character, and still it cannot be said to be a copy of that particular work".<sup>150</sup> As such the judgement of the work would demand a great deal of expertise on the part of the Board that was assessing originality.<sup>151</sup> This was a subject that James Morrison was also concerned with, but he did not specify any details about the type of personnel to make up a board, except to say that he considered that it would not be appropriate for workmen to be judges of originality.<sup>152</sup>

Toplis's other ideas were that the period of registration should depend on the article being protected and that the original design should be deposited in a central London board that should then provide patterns to other regional committees.<sup>153</sup> His key concerns were that the tribunal should be cheap and responsive, making quick decisions.<sup>154</sup>

John Millward also noted that there was difficulty in defining the originality of patterns in order to assess for claims on copyright. This issue had been of great

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<sup>147</sup> SC35 q. 975, p. 69.

<sup>148</sup> SC35 q. 977-979, pp. 69-70.

<sup>149</sup> SC35 q. 1567, p. 116.

<sup>150</sup> SC35 q. 1567, pp. 116-117.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> SC35 q. 237, pp. 18-19.

<sup>153</sup> SC35 qq. 1569-1573, p. 117.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

concern to him because the lace industry in Olney in Buckinghamshire, where he had his business, was particularly rife with plagiarism. This appeared to be a well-organised trade in which there were many people who specialised in stealing and selling designs. He opposed this situation to the one in Nottingham where the construction of lace through machinery seemed to be allied to more extensive protection in terms of pattern.<sup>155</sup> Here the workers were observed in production and could not buy and sell other firms' patterns.<sup>156</sup> Millward suggested that a tribunal for judging patterns had to be made up of manufacturers and pattern-drawers because only they had the knowledge to define what constituted originality in a design.<sup>157</sup> The witness also suggested that there should be a central registry, perhaps in Somerset House "...where every pattern should be drawn on a stamp; there should be a pattern worked in lace scaled on, to correspond with it".<sup>158</sup>

## Publications

The fourth category of discussion was the issue of the usefulness of publications in the diffusion of principles of art and design. This was a particularly politicised category as during the period of the Select Committee, many of the Radical members in particular were campaigning for the removal of a tax on paper that made newspapers and other publications too expensive for the working class to buy. This had been termed the 'tax on knowledge'.<sup>159</sup> But as Joel Wiener (1969) points out, much of the discussion by middle-class reformers such as Edward Lytton Bulwer, Joseph Hume, John Roebuck, George Grote, Henry Warburton, John Bowring, Lord John Russell and Thomas Spring-Rice (*all* of whom were on the Select Committee of 1835), appeared to reveal ulterior motives. This group were certainly keen to remove the tax on paper, and in so doing were simultaneously removing the threat from what was considered by them to be "...seditious journalism and disregard for the law", i.e. unstamped working class Radical and revolutionary writing.<sup>160</sup> Instead this group offered a set of favoured

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<sup>155</sup> SC36 q. 152, p. 16.

<sup>156</sup> SC36 q. 165, p. 17.

<sup>157</sup> SC36 q. 174, p. 18.

<sup>158</sup> SC36 q. 171, p. 18.

<sup>159</sup> Wiener *The War of the Unstamped* 1969, p. 22.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26. Also references to members of reform group on pp. 29-52.



and recognisable texts for working people that had been sanctioned by the reformers and could form part of libraries in Mechanics' Institutes. These were texts such as the *Penny Magazine*, printed by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.<sup>161</sup>

Charles Harriot Smith, the architectural modeller was asked about the habits of his workmen as regards reading and he noted that in the group of workers who were "further removed from the mechanical department", i.e. who did the finer quality style of decoration not simply the usual form of everyday modelling, he had noticed that they read more. This had been aided by the "...penny publications" which he noted "...most of my men take...in".<sup>162</sup> Interestingly, this questioning came directly after the discussion about the changes in habits of his workers. Here the witness considered that an interest in art could be equated with sobriety "...by dividing those workmen who are fond of malt and spirituous liquors, from those who attend the coffee-houses and coffee-shops".<sup>163</sup>

The relationship between a maintenance of order and education through cheap publications was also discussed by Edward Cowper who was the joint inventor of the Applegath and Cowper steam printing machine and therefore intimately connected to the debate on the diffusion of printed knowledge.<sup>164</sup> He explained the benefits to public order of cheap publications:

*...popular instruction* is the grand occupation of the printing machine. Of an 8s. volume on Political Economy, perhaps 750 copies might be sold in two years, and teach the rich the advantage of machinery, but would never reach the poor; whereas, of the little 1s. work, called the "Results of Machinery", 25, 000 copies were sold, and in the hands of the poor in three months, and checked, in a most decided manner, the burning of threshing machines and other farming property.<sup>165</sup>

Cowper discussed many aspects of publication, particularly as they related to the diffusion of artistic principles. Of key importance for him therefore was the sense

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>162</sup> SC35 qq. 656-657, p. 45.

<sup>163</sup> SC36 q. 654-5, p. 45.

<sup>164</sup> SC36 q. 580, p. 49.

<sup>165</sup> SC36 q. 599, p. 51.

that the copies of works of art should be of a high standard. He noted that again in the *Penny Magazine*, which was under the publishing house of Charles Knight, there were some excellent reproductions of paintings from the Renaissance masters, as well as the complete outline of the Elgin Marbles.<sup>166</sup> "...[T]ake the cartoons of Raphael" explained Mr. Cowper

...it is quite clear that there are hundreds of thousands of persons who are now acquainted with what are the forms and figures and groupings in these cartoons, that never would have known them by any lecture or description whatever, and who would never have an opportunity of seeing the originals.<sup>167</sup>

Other journals that he recommended were the *Sunday Magazine*, *Chambers' Journal*, the *Magasin Pittoresque* and the *Magasin Universel of Paris*. All of which he printed. On this subject he concluded that

...every Saturday I have the satisfaction of reflecting that 360, 000 copies of these useful publications are issued to the public, diffusing science and taste and good feeling, without one sentence of an immoral tendency in the whole.<sup>168</sup>

Some of the same views were expressed by Joseph Clinton Robertson, who was the editor of the *Mechanics' Magazine*. He also suggested the need for good engraving in order to convey the real sense of a work of art and was very particular about his demands. He claimed that there was no point in employing a poor engraver to copy the work of an artistic genius such as Raphael or Michelangelo, because "[a]n engraving, by a secondary artist, of a good painting, like an ordinary translation of a first-rate poem, is always sure to lack much of the beauty of the original".<sup>169</sup> On this subject he mused on the benefits of metallic relief in opposition to the present process of working by roller press, noting that if there could be a change in the system then production numbers would rise from 400 a day to 20, 000.<sup>170</sup> The stress on the quality of printing was

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<sup>166</sup> SC36 q. 595, p. 50.

<sup>167</sup> SC36 q. 596, p. 50.

<sup>168</sup> SC36 q. 590, p. 50.

<sup>169</sup> SC35 q. 1664, p. 126.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.



an extremely important point for Robertson because “...copies [of works of art] will find their way...where museums cannot”.<sup>171</sup>

Other witnesses recommended specific texts that had been useful in the diffusion of principles of art. James Morrison noted in particular the book by Mr. Hope, i.e. *Household Furniture and Decoration* of 1807 (see Figure 4.16 in Chapter 4 for an illustration).<sup>172</sup> This gave a graphic description of the designer’s house in Duchess Street, which he had completely redesigned. The style, though fundamentally based on Classical style also incorporated other elements such as Egyptian.<sup>173</sup> George Morant, the house-decorator reported on texts from Germany and Austria. He suggested that these were an excellent example of how the British Government could diffuse an ‘approved’ knowledge of design, as some of them had been commissioned by the Austrian Government.<sup>174</sup> The witness explained that the works covered a number of aspects of interior design and were entitled (in translation): *Book of Ornaments for the practical use of Architects, Decoration and Room-Painters, Carpet Manufacturers, Silk, Wool and Damask Weavers, etc.* by C. Bötticker, Berlin 1836; *Ornaments of all Classical Epochs of Art after the Originals* by Professor William Zahn, Berlin 1831 and *Ornaments in the Practical Use of Room Decorators, with an illustrative text* published by J. F. Stodh.<sup>175</sup> He briefly described some of the subjects they covered as being “...from the antique, taken on the spot at Pompeii and in other parts of Italy, and the others are original designs”.<sup>176</sup> Of the designs taken from archaeological remains, it was the accuracy and the colouring that was so impressive in the books. The witness lamented that there were no such books published in Britain.<sup>177</sup>

In this chapter a general outline of the areas of overt discussion has been made, but in each of these areas the motifs for the following discussion are already

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<sup>171</sup> SC35 q. 1665, p. 126.

<sup>172</sup> SC35 q. 182, p. 14.

<sup>173</sup> For a full outline of the rooms see Thornton & Watkin “New Light on the Hope Mansion in Duchess Street” 1987, pp. 162-177.

<sup>174</sup> SC36 q. 514, p. 45.

<sup>175</sup> SC36 q. 511, pp. 44-45.

<sup>176</sup> SC36 q. 513, p. 45.

<sup>177</sup> SC36 q. 515-6, p. 45.

apparent. There are several underlying themes that will be dealt with at length in the next chapters such as the idea that seeing works of art offers a mystical, almost religious experience. As we shall see the notion of seeing works of artistic genius with one's own eyes, and the impression that this sight made on the mind and memory, was considered particularly important to artistic creativity. This concern is also reflected in the discussions surrounding copyright, which may appear to simply refer to the mechanics of law but fundamentally offer discussion on how one assesses what is original or not. Again this is a theme indicative of a greater tradition that is fundamental to the alternative viewpoints on creativity within artistic and scientific theory – a debate that lies at the heart of the Select Committee. Another aspect that will be discussed later and that has already been hinted at within this chapter is the discussion surrounding what type of knowledge is applicable for the teaching of design for manufactures. Fundamentally this is the question of which disciplines are appropriate for an education in design, and what implications these sets of knowledge have for social order. As has been outlined in the previous chapter, this is again crucial to an understanding of the Select Committee debate. Other threads that impinge on an analysis of the debate that have already been highlighted by this outline of the Select Committee are the overwhelming domination of Classicism as a theoretical basis for the principles of design, as well as the conflicts between control and freedom as implied by the proposed centralised management of regional organisations. The following chapters therefore attempt to separate out the complexities of this discussion by first considering the approved style of design as outlined in the Select Committee (Chapter 3), secondly by the exploring the process that was thought to have produced these objects (Chapter 4) and thirdly, by analysing how the Benthamite view of the design process may have differed from this understanding of artistic practice (Chapter 5).



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# Chapter 3

## Examples of Superior Design

This and the next chapter provide a crucial stage in the elucidation of how design for manufactures intersected with societal management through the abstracting of design as a principle. The chapters outline the discussions from the 1835-6 Select Committee that are specifically concerned with the judgement of what was considered superior and inferior examples of design. The two chapters are therefore a synthesis of the suggestions on good design given in the Select Committee, which can be shaped into a set of principles when the fragmented views of the discussion are combined. The named examples provided in witness testimony will be discussed in relation to nine categories that have been defined through a consideration of the evidence presented. These are – colour, perspective, outline, workmanship, form, botanical study, archaeological accuracy and narrative or *istoria*. These all betray a debt to the literature of the previous century that had begun to establish the application of certain types of theory in relation to design. In addition Chapter 4 will consider the last and most complex category of anatomical accuracy in close detail. This category has been separated from the others as it is given detailed attention throughout the proceedings and as such signals that it is a crucial component in the search for a possible model of Benthamite design. However, in this Chapter, the final concept of narrative or *istoria* also plays an important role and it is shown to underlie all the other characteristics of good design. Therefore as a principle of design in its broadest meaning this similarly plays a crucial part of Chapters 4 and 5. The present Chapter concludes by considering whether the outline of a possible set of principles may reflect a similar process undertaken after the 1835-6 proceedings had been published; one that may have contributed to the development of later organisation of art education.

On an initial reading of the Select Committee proceedings it seems broadly speaking, that the witnesses considered bad design to be British, while good design was French. Of the thirty-seven witnesses asked to compare British and French products, thirty-four considered that in comparison British goods were



inferior; particularly in the areas of textiles, some metal-ware, porcelain, furniture and interior design. Of the three remaining witnesses who were asked, two of them, Charles Harriot Smith (an ornamental sculptor)<sup>1</sup> and Noel St. Leon (an interior designer),<sup>2</sup> considered that British and French production was basically at the same level. The remaining witness, Joseph Clinton Robertson (the editor of the *Mechanics' Magazine*), believed that French textile design was popular simply because it was French and anything from that nation was fashionable. Rather French design in his opinion had no more claim than British design on good taste.<sup>3</sup> His comment on French design was echoed by another witness John Millward, who was a lace manufacturer. Although Millward strongly agreed that French design was superior to British products, he also suggested that the French did sometimes suffer from the same problems of inferior design as the British, particularly in the lace industry.<sup>4</sup> These however were the views of the minority and generally, on an initial reading French products appear to be proclaimed as far superior to those produced by the British.

As Mervyn Romans (1998) has noted, this sense of the opposition of bad British design and good French design has led many commentators to situate the inquiry purely in economic terms.<sup>5</sup> And indeed some witnesses specifically referred to the economic threat from French imports as being the main reason why manufacturers and workers were keen to improve design, particularly in the area of textiles.<sup>6</sup> However, the evidence from other sources suggests that although there were changes in market particularly in textiles these were no less productive, and prosperity continued to remain relatively steady during the period.<sup>7</sup> Although it is not the particular focus of this thesis to consider why the Select Committee was established in the first instance, it should be pointed out that the emphasis on the reasoning behind the inquiry being simply economic has

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<sup>1</sup> SC35 q. 667, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> SC36 q. 389, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> SC35 q. 1603, p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> SC36 q. 182, p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Romans "Politics, Economics and Art Education..." in *Art Education Discourses* 1998, p. 96.

<sup>6</sup> See for example James Skene (SC35 q. 1121, p. 80) and George Eld (SC36 q. 487, p. 35) discussing the Paisley and Coventry weaving trades respectively.

<sup>7</sup> Richardson *Coventry: Past and Present* 1987, p. 32.

prevented a closer analysis of exactly what is discussed as inferior and superior design during the inquiry.

When one actually considers the examples provided by witnesses, suggestions as to what was inferior design did include products from other nations, as well as British design. Furthermore, many examples of superior design given were actually British although there could be several reasons for this. The witnesses were largely manufacturers or traders themselves, and as such perhaps did not want to highlight the poor quality of their own products or those of their close colleagues. Furthermore these manufacturers may also have taken the opportunity of advertising the superiority of their own products against the grain of more widespread British design inferiority. Other witnesses may have taken part in the inquiry because they were hoping to highlight injustices where their patterns had been plagiarised, so robbing them of profit; there are a number of witnesses who gave such evidence.<sup>8</sup> There also seems to be a sense of nostalgia in some of the examples of good British design given, where the manufactures of the mid- to late-eighteenth-century, characterised particularly by the Lunar Society group which included Josiah Wedgwood and Matthew Boulton, are heralded as good design examples.<sup>9</sup> However these manufacturers are also introduced by those posing the questions,<sup>10</sup> which indicates that the popularisation of design discourse from the 1730s<sup>11</sup> had established as I noted earlier, a certain design vocabulary in the minds of the Committee members. Thus perhaps this was not necessarily nostalgia but an illustration of the sum of theory surrounding design to that date, particularly in the reading of a gentleman. Therefore, despite all possible motives based on the business acumen of witnesses, it is still useful to consider the actual examples given in the inquiry. This is not simply because as a whole these have not been examined previously, but that in so doing, a more accurate sense of what shaped the debates will be arrived at.

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<sup>8</sup> See for example the evidence of John Martin (SC35 q. 943, p. 66) and John Henning (SC35 q. 859, p. 59).

<sup>9</sup> Sir John Dean Paul SC36 q. 2060, pp. 172-173.

<sup>10</sup> An example of questioning can be seen in SC35 q. 1619.

<sup>11</sup> Craske "Plan and Control..." 1999, p. 188.



In attempting to consider the examples of bad and good design given in the Select Committee proceedings, it is necessary to engage with a concept that Michael Baxandall (1988) has described as the 'period eye'. By this phrase he suggested that every culture at a particular point in time possesses a unique perceptual experience by which they construct and engage with objects. This is perhaps not easy for an observer at a later point in time to understand, given that a commentator will inevitably be at some distance from the particular "...cognitive style" that is being studied and will possess instead the 'eye' of their own period or design circle.<sup>12</sup>

To begin to construct the 'period eye' of the 1835-6 inquiry then, it is important to engage with the individual examples provided in the testimony of witnesses but this is not always easy. During the proceedings there are many examples given of bad and good design, and at points the testimony indicates that witnesses produced actual examples to show the Committee. However only a few of these were included in the proceedings, for instance the shapes of the terracotta vessels produced by the Lowesby works (Adelaide Street, London). These were based on Etruscan vases studied at the British Museum by Mr. Edward Cowper.<sup>13</sup> Details such as these make it fairly simple to at least study the same object as that being examined by the Select Committee personnel. However, this happens fairly rarely in the inquiry proceedings.

Another useful way in which an object was discussed in the proceedings is when the witness verbally describes the example, even if we are not given the exact manufacturing details of it or its image. This is the case in the testimony of James Crabb who describes a sample of French wallpaper that he has brought in for the Committee to see. In noting the beauty of the foliage, the overall aerial perspective in the colouring, the "...spirit and truth of the animals",<sup>14</sup> as well as the painterly details of the use of brush and sponge,<sup>15</sup> we are given some of what Baxandall terms the categories of the 'period eye'.<sup>16</sup> These categories form what

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<sup>12</sup> Baxandall *Painting and Experience* 1988, pp. 29-40.

<sup>13</sup> SC36 q. 586, p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> SC35 q. 989, p. 70.

<sup>15</sup> SC35 q. 993, p. 71.

<sup>16</sup> Baxandall *Painting and Experience* 1988, p. 35.

he considers to be the ‘cognitive style’ by which one processes the basic raw data of the light on the retina.<sup>17</sup> However this type of description is extremely rare in the proceedings and many of the examples of bad and good design are indicated simply by the general name of the firm, such as the work of the De La Rue Company, Bunhill Row, London.<sup>18</sup> Although this narrows down the choice, it still demands an imaginative leap from the twenty-first-century reader.

Though much deduction is needed with the named example, the vast majority of superior or inferior designs referred to in the inquiry, are neither named nor described. Rather it is more common that the witness will only hint as to the identity of an object by mentioning that it has been made from a particular material or by a specific process, that it comes from a particular region or country, or that it exhibits either inferior or superior design principles. For example, in his discussion of the standards of French and English textiles, Samuel Smith noted simply that “[i]n the finer description of fancy goods, the French taste prevails certainly to a very great degree”.<sup>19</sup> So it is rather difficult to deduce what is being referred to. However despite these problems some analysis can be made by considering other more detailed examples which when they are combine suggest a set of criteria. These principles will be presented in the following part of the chapter.

## Principles

However before I embark on outlining the set of criteria for good design that has been distilled from the Select Committee proceedings, some comment must be made on the appropriateness of defining a set of identifiable criteria or characteristics in the first instance. As I noted in the introduction, there is an overwhelming sense that at the basis of the Select Committee discussion of design lay the assumption that there should be (indeed there *had* to be) definable design ‘principles’. This was not for simply artistic reasons but was central to a broader sense of societal design and must have therefore been of particular attraction to the Benthamites. The desire for principle can be particularly

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>18</sup> Mr. John Howell’s testimony SC35 around p. 32.

<sup>19</sup> SC35 q. 272, p. 21.



identified in questioning that concerned two ‘inferior’ styles in the Select Committee. These were the Louis XIV or XV style (it was noted that there was some confusion in the public’s use of the term as to which was which),<sup>20</sup> and Chinese design.

For John B. Papworth, the movement towards inferior design was initiated by Louis XIV when he judged that the ‘Roman Style’, i.e. that studied by Michelangelo, was too plain.<sup>21</sup> For the witness this assessment was clearly rather negative as later in the proceedings Papworth notes that the “...classic or pure style of art” was that practised by Michelangelo among others.<sup>22</sup> So immediately we have a very particular use of language - bad design was that which made a ‘pure’ style like that of Michelangelo’s, more flamboyant and exaggerated, qualities that could as easily describe social behaviour as design.

Figure 3.1 Jean Le Pautre frontispiece of text on mural decoration c. 1660s.

Papworth explained that at first in the early part of Louis XIV’s reign, the fusion of styles that were created for him were “...very bold ...very sumptuous and a very grand style”; this was exemplified by the work of Jean Le Pautre and others.<sup>23</sup> The proceedings indicate that Papworth showed the Committee two

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<sup>20</sup> John B. Papworth considers that these two styles have been mistaken and that it is the Louis XV style that is the most inferior (SC35 qq. 1264-1269, p. 92). Later Thomas Leverton Donaldson claims that it is the Louis XIV style that is bad design (SC36 around p. 34).

<sup>21</sup> SC35 q. 1268, p. 92.

<sup>22</sup> SC35 q. 1276, p. 92.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid and SC35 q. 1267, p. 92.

prints of this approved style, and these may have come from Le Pautre's book of designs for mural decoration that was first published in the 1660s (see Figure 3.1 on the previous page).

Peter Thornton (1998) notes how this work was not intended to provide a series of models for copying but more "... 'ideas that are intended to fire the imagination'" and the book was popular outside France.<sup>24</sup> This may account for Papworth's inclusion of Le Pautre in his testimony because as we shall see, it was essential to many of the witnesses that design knowledge should be transferable. Just as Papworth suggests, modern design historians have also described the style in which Le Pautre was working as a period when the Classical and Baroque styles were fused.<sup>25</sup> However, again akin to the Select Committee witness, it has been similarly noted by modern-day scholars that the fine balance of the King's passion for the Baroque "...regulated in accordance with academic Classical principles", ended in 1683. This was when J. B. Colbert, who had been a steadying hand to Louis XIV's excesses as the Surintendant des Bâtiments died.<sup>26</sup> Papworth noted that the styles of the King's later reign and that of his successor Louis XV had "...interrupted the chasteness of the Roman style"<sup>27</sup> which had been "...debased...by the employment of meaner workmen".<sup>28</sup> Again the choice of vocabulary is very striking.

For Papworth this later Louis XV style in particular appeared to have *no principles* unlike the Roman Style and the earlier fine balance achieved by the Louis XIV style that it was derived from. In lacking principles and perhaps because it was based on an emotive desire, then any transmission of the style into later design was naturally problematic. According to Papworth, the Louis XV style as it appeared in later mainstream production, essentially required and indeed demanded a complete lack of artistic education. This meant that manufacturers preferred employing "...workmen of very mediocre talents" who

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<sup>24</sup> Thornton *Form and Decoration* 1998, pp. 115-116.

<sup>25</sup> Blunt *Baroque and Rococo* 1978, p. 116.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 123-130.

<sup>27</sup> SC35 q. 1269, p. 92.

<sup>28</sup> SC35 q. 1267, p. 92.



through ignorance were untroubled by artistic principles.<sup>29</sup> Thomas L. Donaldson, giving evidence in 1836 also suggested that the Louis XIV style was in opposition to artistic judgement.<sup>30</sup> Another witness, Mr. George Morant, similarly noted that genuine examples of the Louis Quartorze style could be understood as superior design, but that its later flamboyance and lack of principles resulted in inferior copies, where manufacturers considered that they could "...turn it and twist it about as they like[d]".<sup>31</sup> As we have seen therefore the testimony surrounding the Louis XIV and XV styles exhibited a very strong concern with morals. The language used to describe this type of design was one where 'excess' and 'extravagance' 'debase' the more 'chaste' and 'pure' Roman style, indicating that a moral decision was made in choosing one style over another. The Louis XV style was allied to the excesses of overt sexuality and luxury perhaps more commonly associated with Bacchic revelry, while the Roman Style was portrayed as a considered, principled, virginal and therefore honourable design.

The identification of these negative associations was clearly important because the Louis XV style was considered by the witnesses to appeal more readily to the British public who were themselves uneducated in art.<sup>32</sup> This was outlined very specifically by Charles Harriot Smith who noted that "...the public, as a body, are not yet sufficiently educated in the arts to discriminate between pure classical elegance and meretricious finery".<sup>33</sup> The same witness had previously described the drunken excesses of the working class,<sup>34</sup> and thus there was a sense that the influence of the Louis XV style exacerbated the tendencies towards excess thought to be common amongst the lower spheres of society. As such the witnesses recommended that the style should be eradicated from the culture of working class design. A similar relationship between politics and aesthetics had been contained in William Hogarth's (1752) text *The Analysis of Beauty* where he identified the value of variety as a quality of design. Yet this was not an unguided principle, but "...a composed variety; for variety uncomposed and

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<sup>29</sup> SC35 q. 1264, p. 92.

<sup>30</sup> SC36 q. 362, p. 34.

<sup>31</sup> SC36 q. 541, p. 46.

<sup>32</sup> Morant (ibid).

<sup>33</sup> SC35 q. 670, p. 46.

<sup>34</sup> Again the evidence of Charles Harriott Smith SC35 q. 654-5, p. 45.

without design, is confusion and deformity”.<sup>35</sup> As Mark Hallett (2000) comments, there was again a sense that this was not simply a category of material design, but that Hogarth applied the same principle to the culture within a city, fearing that “...thanks to the absence of authority and design, heterogeneity has run riot and lead to a threatening lack of order and decorum”.<sup>36</sup>

In Baxandall’s discussion of the period eye he notes that its characteristics are apparent most when a group has aspired to learn them in order to improve their own standing.<sup>37</sup> On this point he further notes that these “[t]aught skills have rules and categories, a terminology and stated standards, which are the medium through which they are teachable”.<sup>38</sup> Thus if we are to isolate the characteristics of bad design that can be drawn from the Louis XV example, it would seem that in the absence of principles that are teachable, there was a prevention of any possible improvement in societal advancement. This was because the style, in not being appropriate for teaching due to an apparent lack of principles, had to therefore rely for its transmission and appreciation on the unguided, and often base desires of the individual. If one were to consider this in relation to the Spiral of Success outlined by Richard Burnet, we might suggest that the Louis XV style in particular was understood by the witnesses to actively work against the goal of encouraging improvement through the social ranks. This was also confirmed again by Hogarth’s treatise, in which the final chapter ‘Of Action’ gave advice as to how a reader could improve their own deportment and thus literally their standing within society.<sup>39</sup> Here Hogarth was concerned with the importance of being able to teach the principles of design in order to create societal improvement as a whole.

The other category of inferior design highlighted by the Committee was Chinese design, which seemed to include both design from China, and also that produced in Britain and influenced by Chinese exports.<sup>40</sup> As Sarah Richards (1999) notes,

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<sup>35</sup> Quoted in Hallett *Hogarth*, 2000, p. 247.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Hallett *Hogarth* 2000, p. 258.

<sup>40</sup> However Samuel Wile comments that Chinese design is not copied in his particular firm of Jennens and Bettridge (*SC35* q. 774, p. 53).



whether a commentator is describing indigenous production or copies of the style created in European countries is not always clear and it is considered that for this discussion a distinction is not particularly necessary.<sup>41</sup> Two main witnesses outline the deficiencies of Chinese design, Samuel Wiley who worked for the Birmingham japanning firm of Jennens and Bettridge, and Thomas L. Donaldson who was an architect; however, there are other witnesses that also refer to it. The main criticisms of the Chinese style were that in outline and perspective the design practice was deficient. And this lack of practical study had therefore led to a reliance on whimsy, or as Joseph Clinton Robertson termed it “...working to the head”.<sup>42</sup> The results of this lack of solid foundation were designs containing recognisable motifs but showing little attention to real objects. The effects of this design were again widespread because Chinoiserie (the copy of Chinese designs – see figure 3.26 in this chapter) appeared to appeal to the British public.<sup>43</sup> For Donaldson and Wiley the demand for the style resulted in British china painters copying it and thus ignoring the principles of superior design.<sup>44</sup> In this way just as with the criticisms of the Louis Quatorze style, witnesses were similarly identifying a lack of design principles that they believed to be damaging to the public taste.

It is not surprising that the two main named styles to be highlighted in the Select Committee as being of an inferior design quality were the Louis XV and the Chinese styles. This is because since at least the seventeenth-century and the court of Louis XIV the designs had been linked.<sup>45</sup> As with the taste for the Baroque, Chinoiserie had also been combined with Classicism and in the early reign of Louis XIV this fusion produced a restrained and elegant style, centring more on the use of materials such as lacquer and porcelain rather than simply on decoration.<sup>46</sup> But after Louis XIV’s death (1715), the French Court embraced

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<sup>41</sup> Richards *Eighteenth-Century Ceramics* 1999, p. 178.

<sup>42</sup> SC35 q. 1629, p. 122.

<sup>43</sup> “Do not the designs which are most sought for by the great mass of consumers proceed from the excavations of Pompeii? - I doubt whether those are the designs most sought after; there is a pattern which was a long time in very general use for table services, called the “Willow Pattern;” there is nothing very classical in that” (Joseph Clinton Robertson SC35 q. 1622, p. 122).

<sup>44</sup> Samuel Wiley notes that he could sell even “...the most unmeaning” designs (SC35 q. 765, pp. 52-3).

<sup>45</sup> Honour *Chinoiserie* 1961, p. 53.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

whimsy and fantasy, in which Chinoiserie combined with the Rococo.<sup>47</sup> The love of this dual style was popular even into the nineteenth century in France and a commentator from the period suggested that the continuing public attraction to extravagance inherent in Rococo-Chinoiserie, smacked of a time before the Revolution.<sup>48</sup> Again just like the suggestions of the witnesses on the Select Committee, these styles were thought to be morally and perhaps even politically dangerous.

The proceeding discussion on principles has made apparent the importance within the Select Committee proceedings of the concept that a principle in design provided a bridge between production in manufacture and the identification of social principles through the disciplining of public taste.<sup>49</sup> Principles in design therefore clearly had the potential to provide an analogical mechanism by which to consider, channel and enforce social order. Therefore the following principles outlined by the Select Committee witnesses, though referring to design, were equally applicable to the description of social behaviour.

## Colour

Colour was a criterion of design often referred to in relation to general examples of good design within the Select Committee, but perhaps the most obvious place to begin in relation to the principles of colour is with the witness David Ramsey Hay, who had published a book on the subject. His text had been reprinted and given the enlarged title of *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring adapted to Interior Decorations, Manufactures and Other Useful Purposes* in 1836, and in this later volume Hay expanded both the range of applications for his work as well as the scientific discussion of colouring.<sup>50</sup> As was noted in the introduction, this new edition had been inspired by the published testimony of the 1835 session of the Select Committee where the author quotes the evidence of Mr. Smith, James Skene, James Crabb and Charles Toplis.<sup>51</sup> In agreement with these witnesses, Hay's basic reasoning for writing such a text was that in British

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>48</sup> This was Alexandre Laborde in 1808 (Ibid, p. 97).

<sup>49</sup> Romans 'Political, economic, social and cultural determinants...' 1998, p. 208.

<sup>50</sup> Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., pp. 53-55.



manufactures there seemed to be no notion of "...apply[ing] the rules that ought to regulate the assembling of various colours together...".<sup>52</sup> For the witness, the composition of colouring had to be based on the scientific principles of colour harmony that he understood to be akin to musical harmonics.<sup>53</sup> That British manufactures often displayed poor colouring was also confirmed in the testimony of George Morant who suggested that when his workers were doing anything that required a good knowledge of colouring, such as a "...correctness in the shades and tints of colours", they had to be supervised.<sup>54</sup> James Crabb had similarly acknowledged the difficulty with colour, and showed the Committee one of his own designs in order to explain his point. He suggested that the colouring "...is entirely my own idea, but it is done without rule. In France they would do it on a fixed principle. I am not aware of that rule...".<sup>55</sup>

Extending his discussion Crabb claimed that the need for an "...equality of colour" which could be found in the work of the ancient painters was important in decoration but because it was an education that he did not have, his class of worker would "...labour till we obtain an effect that pleases our eye; and this is as often wrong as right".<sup>56</sup> The importance of an 'equality of colour' and Crabb's desire to study the work of ancient painters indicated two different applications for a knowledge of colour by the skilled worker in manufactures. Firstly, the term 'equality of colour' implied the relationship between contrasting colours and hues as they were combined in a two-dimensional pattern and secondly an interior which contained "highly and variously coloured furniture".<sup>57</sup> Figures 3.2 and 3.3 overleaf show these two genres, both of which required an 'equality of colour' as the foundation for their tonal harmony.<sup>58</sup> In Figure 3.2 the printed cotton has been produced through a combination of four colours creating a holistic and complementary palette.<sup>59</sup> Figure 3.3 shows a coloured design by the French firm Percier and Fontaine from 1789. This is another example of a

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<sup>52</sup> SC36 q. 457, pp. 40-41.

<sup>53</sup> This was understood from reading Field's *Essay on the Analogy and Harmony of Colours* (op cit., pp. 12-13).

<sup>54</sup> SC36 q. 514, p. 45.

<sup>55</sup> SC35 q. 1060, p. 74.

<sup>56</sup> SC35 q. 1062, p. 75.

<sup>57</sup> Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, p. 19.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-24.

<sup>59</sup> Schoeser & Rufey *English and American Textiles* 1989, p. 86.

Figure 3.2 English cotton four colour print, c. 1830.

Figure 3.3 Coloured design of interior by Percier and Fontaine *Recueil des Decorations Intérieures*, 1789.

harmonious and toned interior, employing colours associated with the archaeological remains of Pompeii.<sup>60</sup>

Secondly Crabb's comments suggested the importance of the ancient masters in learning colouring, and this indicates a concern with a slightly different type of design.<sup>61</sup> Writing on fine art, John Gould (1834) claimed that the paintings of the ancient masters were "...the books in which a young painter must chiefly look for the rules of colouring".<sup>62</sup> The relationship between fine art training and manufacture was also indicated by Crabb's comment that a particular example of a good French wallpaper was one that revealed the "...carefully studied... aerial perspective of the colouring".<sup>63</sup> We know from the brief description of the example in the Proceedings that this was indeed a paper with 'landscape and

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<sup>60</sup> Thornton *Form and Decoration* 1998, p. 168.

<sup>61</sup> Hay also recommends the study of the ancient masters but considers that the ultimate source should be nature (Ibid., pp. 71-72).

<sup>62</sup> Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, p. ix. Gould goes on to note that it was essential that these paintings should be well preserved if the proper principles of colouring were to be learnt because otherwise the true nature of the hues in a painting would give a false sense as though being viewed "behind a dull glass" (p. x). These views are perhaps one of the reasons why the condition of the paintings in the National collection were being examined particularly during the 1836 session of the Select Committee.

<sup>63</sup> SC35 q. 989, p. 70. Aerial perspective was a term derived from the French term *perspective aérienne* and meant the use of non-linear perspective, i.e. systems that did not use mathematics as the basis for the creating the illusion of depth. One of the main ways in which aerial perspective was applied was through the use of changes in colour to denote distance (Turner *Dictionary of Art* 1998, pp. 491-492, Vol. 24).



figures' and thus in the example the attention to colouring was allied more closely to that of landscape painting. Charles Toplis, vice-president of the London Mechanics' Institute outlined this demand for painterly skills in design for manufactures, when he was asked whether a knowledge of the arts of design was necessary for artisans. He suggested that:

[m]any important branches of manufacture call for careful cultivation of the eye, for the purpose of arranging, assorting and contrasting colours, which, as an affair of taste, calls for some portion of a painter's education.<sup>64</sup>

Figure 3.4 Detail of 'Vues de Brésil', French manufacturer Jean & Cie Zuber. Images taken from J. M. Rugendas's *Voyage pittoresque dans le Brésil* (1827).<sup>65</sup>

Therefore as well as colour being important for two-dimensional composition much design of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century demanded the ability of a designer to portray an illusionistic three-dimensional quality, in the same way that it was important for the fine artist. David Irwin (1997) points out that wallpaper that portrayed realistic landscapes had been made popular by French manufacturers from around 1804, and the desire for ever more sophisticated scenes had continued into the 1830s and beyond.<sup>66</sup> Figure 3.4

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<sup>64</sup> SC35 q. 1566, pp. 115-116.

<sup>65</sup> Hoskins *The Papered Wall* 1994, pp. 106-7.

<sup>66</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, pp. 370-371.

provides an example of the need for fine art skills particularly in the portrayal of the aerial perspective visible in the foliage giving an impression of distance through the use of colour. This example of wallpaper could have been similar to the one that Crabb described, which was quoted at the beginning of this chapter. The importance of colour in providing a sense of space was also noted by Hay who suggested that if too many strong colours in interior design were combined “...a room of this description resembles a Chinese landscape, where foreground and distance are jumbled together”.<sup>67</sup> As we have already seen Chinese design was characterised as lacking the geometrical and perspectival basis of good art and it seemed from Hay’s analogy that this was also extended to the Chinese use of colour in defining depth in a design. This characteristic is visible in figure 3.5, which shows a piece of export porcelain from the eighteenth-century probably produced in Ching-tê-Chên, under the supervision of Jesuit priests (these circumstances explain the religious imagery of John the Baptist).<sup>68</sup> The example illustrates that as well as perspective in terms of outline, the Chinese decorator has used very strong colours in the background of the piece and particularly in the shape on the left which may represent rocks and the tree to the right and behind the figures. The foreground by contrast is relatively light in tone.

Figure 3.5 Export porcelain c.18<sup>th</sup> Century.

Not basing the application of colour on scientific principles could therefore prove disruptive to the entire design resulting in a gaudy and chaotic pattern or a design with a bewildering and confused narrative.

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<sup>67</sup> Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, p. 24.

<sup>68</sup> Jourdain & Jenys *Chinese Export Art* 1967, p. 49.



## Perspective

The discussion of the spatial importance of colouring leads on to the next characteristic of superior design as it was outlined in the Select Committee - the importance of perspective. Thomas Donaldson claimed that Chinese design was generally inferior because of the lack of scientific and geometrical principles on which the work was based.<sup>69</sup> He noted that:

[p]erspective of course is necessary, because it is nature reduced to rules; nature herself is subject to certain rules which have been discovered from an examination of nature. Perspective is essentially necessary, for we find that the Chinese works of art are deficient entirely in either linear or aerial perspective, and from that deficiency fail in producing the effect of which they are otherwise capable...<sup>70</sup>

Thus according to Donaldson the Chinese decorator was actually working against the very principles of nature. Figure 3.6 illustrates both this deficiency (according to Western models) and the obvious skill of Chinese design that the witness referred to in the quote. The detail of the plate is another piece of export porcelain made in China for the Western market, and in the attempt to make design relevant for a European consumer, the Chinese porcelain decorators have tried to use perspective, resulting in a slightly incoherent sense of space. However in the colouring and expression of the figures, the example is actually very fine (though the colouring in the background is again very strong drawing one's eye to the distance when it should be focussing on the group of figures).

Figure 3.6 Export porcelain c.18<sup>th</sup> Century (detail of central picture).

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<sup>69</sup> Wiley SC35 q.774, p. 53. Donaldson SC36 q. 336, p. 32.

<sup>70</sup> SC36 q. 335, p. 32.

In a similar way to Donaldson's suggestion that perspective was the essential principle of nature and if absent from design would result in a violation of natural rules, this was also the viewpoint of Henry Sass. The art teacher noted that the rules of perspective provided an "...infallible mode of ascertaining and representing the true appearance of objects".<sup>71</sup> He continued to explain, in the same tone as Donaldson how "[i]ts principles can never be too scrupulously observed; to deviate in any case is to violate natural propriety, and sacrifice to a fallacious pretext of taste the certainty of truth and science".<sup>72</sup> Here Sass had used similar language to that employed by commentators on inferior styles, who as I have noted, used terms suggesting the corruption of 'pure' and 'chaste' design. Here, terms such as 'violate', 'propriety', 'sacrifice', 'fallacious', 'certainty of truth and science' provide a powerful contrast between the choices of either using or ignoring perspective. Again this was a matter of moral versus immoral behaviour, and it is perhaps no surprise that in Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* he had absorbed the traditional equation between perspective as a way of seeing correctly (i.e. not deviating from what should be looked at) and good posture, the disciplining of physical deportment.<sup>73</sup>

If we return to Sass's original comment that perspective provided an "...infallible mode of ascertaining and representing the true appearance of objects",<sup>74</sup> then it is clear that the understanding of perspective was essential to the activities of an artisan. This was because without it, it was impossible for an artist or designer to even study that which was around him or her, let alone to actually produce superior design. Thus without seeing correctly, one could not study from a real object, an observation that as we shall see was at the basis of Benthamite design. In the brief outline of a system for teaching drawing David Ramsey Hay indicated that one must learn at least elementary perspective in order to move from rendering basic geometric shapes to actual objects, such as a cabbage leaf, which he recommended for the first lesson.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> SC36 q. 239, pp. 23-4.

<sup>72</sup> SC36 q. 210, p. 21.

<sup>73</sup> "After thus having form'd the idea of all movements being as lines, it will not be difficult to conceive, that grace in action depends upon the same principles as have been shown to produce it in forms" (Hogarth *The Analysis of Beauty* 1753, p. 140).

<sup>74</sup> SC36 q. 239, pp. 23-4.

<sup>75</sup> Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, p. 65.



As well as in the reception of the visible world, Sass also noted that perspective was essential for the transmission of information and ideas, and he described an occasion when he required a case for a book he was producing:

I went to a book-binder; I said, “I want a case made very peculiarly, so that language cannot explain it to you: do you understand drawing?” This was spoken to the foreman of Messrs. Layton, in Coldbath-fields; he said, “Yes”. “Then I have no more to say”. I then took a sheet of paper, and drew the geometrical figures; then I drew the perspective views of this book or box, open and shut, and he was perfectly satisfied, and no further conversation took place”.<sup>76</sup>

Joseph Clinton Robertson, editor of the *Mechanics' Magazine*, similarly commented how he had noticed that, though unable to draw themselves, the workmen of his acquaintance were similarly able to “read” drawings “...just as many a man can read and understand our best authors, who if he were himself to take pen in hand could not write a single sentence grammatically”.<sup>77</sup> As Ann Puetz (1999) notes, these comments were based on a traditional theory that drawing was “...a kind of universal *lingua franca* which transcended language as a means of communication of ideas and was uniquely able to bridge gaps in understanding, education and experience”.<sup>78</sup>

Thomas Sheraton had particularly promoted the importance of an education in perspective for artisans in his book *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* from 1793. Figure 3.7 overleaf shows plate 26 from the first part of this text, where the images of furniture as well as the house as a whole, are all rendered to show the principles of perspective; they provide an introduction to the second volume which moves on to individual pieces of furniture. This plate therefore forms a bridge between the instruction contained in the first volume which was concerned with geometry and perspective, and the next series of images which portray carefully produced finished drawings of tables and beds etc., alongside an outline plan and perspectival scheme for the same object. As

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<sup>76</sup> SC36 q. 214, p. 21.

<sup>77</sup> SC35 q. 1589, p. 119.

<sup>78</sup> Puetz “Design Instruction for Artisans...” 1999, p. 219.

such the education provided by Sheraton was to make visible the invisible principles behind the drawing of objects and this is overtly expressed in his frontispiece for the book. The image shows four figures of Greek men and a Classical cherub within an apparently contemporary country house setting.<sup>79</sup> All are using scientific methods to see the scene before them, before putting pen to

Figure 3.7 Plate 26, vol. I of Thomas Sheraton's *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* 1793.

paper. Sheraton's design comes with the statement that "[t]ime alters fashions and frequently obliterates the works of art and ingenuity; but that which is founded on Geometry and real Science, will remain unalterable", which were words echoed by Sass as we have seen.<sup>80</sup> Renzo Dubbini (1990) understands the use of perspective in Sheraton's book to be due to the concern that the cabinet-maker had with producing new designs for ingenious multi-functional furniture, that demanded that the usage of the item, was intimately allied to its ornamental value.<sup>81</sup> As such, Dubbini suggests, it was important that there should be a scientific understanding of the spatial dimensions of pieces of furniture that were to be actively used and moved around; and thus, such planning demanded the use of perspective. But as well as practicality, Ann Puetz notes that, in addition, the use of geometry and perspective by traditionally craft-based designers was

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<sup>79</sup> The view through the archway could almost be a Classical folly on a country estate.

<sup>80</sup> Sheraton *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* 1793, frontispiece.

<sup>81</sup> Dubbini in Pirovano *History of Industrial Design* 1990, p. 89.



important symbolically in promoting their work to a higher level than simply that of manual labour.<sup>82</sup>

## Outline

Outline was not discussed in much detail during the Select Committee, except in the testimony of Samuel Wiley, who noted that it was a quality lacking in much Chinese design.<sup>83</sup> However, Robert Stothard gave some indication that outline was considered to be one of the fundamental aspects of an art education and he noted that often teachers made the mistake of ignoring this important quality, beginning their teaching in too complex a form. The witness continued: “For instance, landscape, which is ideal art, is taught before the mind is correctly imbued with the first principles of outline, light and shadow...”.<sup>84</sup> Outline was therefore conceived as being fundamental, and as such it was one of the most important components of a shift in the 1790s towards a more primitive “...austerity, or purity” as David Irwin terms it;<sup>85</sup> the ‘pure’ style was favoured by Select Committee witnesses. The outline also had associations with the early nineteenth-century Neoplatonic movement and this shall be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

The emphasis on the outline as an essential characteristic of design was in part derived from the appearance of Greek vases.<sup>86</sup> The linear style required very little three-dimensional consideration of space or a deep modelling of the figures, and centred more on communicating the message of the piece through the characters’ outline, similar to the form of a tableau. Irwin identifies the work of John Flaxman in his illustrations of the Homeric poems in particular, as a key example of this form of design.

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<sup>82</sup> Puetz “Design Instruction for Artizans...” 1999, p. 228.

<sup>83</sup> SC35 q. 755, p. 52.

<sup>84</sup> SC36 q. 289, p. 27.

<sup>85</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 299.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

Figure 3.8 Ulysses on the hearth presenting himself to Alcinous and Arete, John Flaxman 1805.

Figure 3.8 gives an example of Flaxman's graphic work, and demonstrates the quality of the artist's outline drawings. The illustration is of Ulysses on the hearth presenting himself to Alcinous and Arete<sup>87</sup> and there is a great subtlety in the way the different figures express their thoughts on the meeting. This is particularly conveyed by the tilt of the various characters' heads and the position of the figures' hands and feet.

In the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries, Flaxman's skill with the outline was used for the surface decoration of objects and he produced much work for manufacturers, particularly in ceramic and metal ware. Figure 3.9 overleaf shows a detail of a Josiah Wedgwood vase with a relief representing the Apotheosis of Homer on jasperware from 1786. The image demonstrates the success of Flaxman's crisp outlines and bas-relief, which make a clear contrast in white against the blue jasper ware.

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<sup>87</sup> Essick & La Belle *Flaxman's Illustrations to Homer* 1977, pages not numbered, plate 12 in *Odyssey*.



Figure 3.9 Detail of Vase with relief of Apotheosis of Homer by John Flaxman for Wedgwood, 1786.

Figure 3.10 shows how effective Flaxman's outline composition also was in metal, a medium in which the reflective qualities enhanced the use of crisp outline and shallow relief. The image is a detail from a cup produced by Paul Storr for Queen Charlotte in 1811-1812.<sup>88</sup> Flaxman was one of the most referred to designers to be identified in the Select Committee as of superior talent and will again be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Figure 3.10 Detail of Cup designed for Paul Storr by John Flaxman c.1811-1812.

## Workmanship

Though the qualities of workmanship were not detailed at length in the proceedings of the Select Committee, it was acknowledged that they were

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<sup>88</sup> Thornton *Form and Decoration* 1998, p. 187.

essential to the success of designs. It was also identified that the ability of artisans to carry out the patterns produced by artists such as John Flaxman was imperative if the quality of the original design was to be translated to the finished object. Robert Butt the manager of the bronze and porcelain department at Howell and James noted that good design could be “...entirely spoiled by the injudicious finishing of muscles, draperies and extremities by an ignorant workman”.<sup>89</sup> In addition to damaging good design, John Papworth explained that even an inferior design was made worse by the general absence of “...practical accuracy”.<sup>90</sup> Giving an example of a good quality workman who simultaneously understood the combination of both design and accuracy and quality of workmanship, Charles Robert Cockerell the architect suggested the carver and sculptor Grinling Gibbons.<sup>91</sup>

Figure 3.11 The Carved Room at Petworth House in 1925, looking North, Grinling Gibbons.

Figure 3.11 shows an image of Gibbons’s carved room at Petworth House, which had been commissioned by the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Somerset around 1690 (the room has been continually altered since its production).<sup>92</sup> Figure 3.12 overleaf shows a detail of his carved work, which was praised in 1749 by Horace Walpole who suggested that the representation of the vases in particular were “...as perfect and beautiful as if they were carved by a Grecian master”.<sup>93</sup> Cockerell similarly recognised the quality of Gibbons’s carving which he described as “...the florid and more elaborate style of our ornament”; this he considered had been replaced

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<sup>89</sup> SC35 q. 567, p. 39.

<sup>90</sup> SC35 q. 1264, p. 92. Papworth uses the term ‘grotesque’ again (SC35 q. 1269, p. 92).

<sup>91</sup> SC35 q. 1431, p. 101.

<sup>92</sup> Rowell “Grinling Gibbons’s Carved Room at Petworth” 2000, p. 19.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 25.



by “cast-work and mechanical process”.<sup>94</sup> Cockerell lamented the change in this practice and believed that “...the attempt to supersede the work of mind and hand by mechanical process for the sake of economy, will always have the effect of degrading and ultimately ruining art”.<sup>95</sup> The modern scholar has similarly recognised Gibbons’s work as a combination of practice more traditionally associated with craft alongside the emergent ability of Gibbons as a fine art sculptor. Like other fine artists his ability was enhanced in particular by a study of Classicism.<sup>96</sup>

Figure 3.12 Detail of carved panel by Grinling Gibbons, n.d.

## Form

Like outline, the issue of form is hard to pin down but there is at least some discussion of it in the Select Committee. There are in effect, two aspects of form. One is the idea of form within a composition such as that on a vase or a textile. This is naturally based on the drawing/painting abilities of a designer and could be understood as one of the fundamental principles of design for both fine art and manufactures. However as with the category of outline, form of this type was also dependent on understanding the particular process for which one was designing in order that the pattern should be transferred successfully to the finished object. This will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 5.

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<sup>94</sup> Op cit.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Gibson “The emergence of Grinling Gibbons as a ‘statuary’ 1999, p. 23.

The painter Richard Ramsey Reinagle offered a basic plan to the Committee whereby form could be made more elegant by using a simple, almost step-by-step plan; one page of this was reprinted in the proceedings (see figure 3.13 for a detail). In these instructions Reinagle was effectively deciphering the technique by which the Greeks decorated their vases and aligned his simple forms to elements within the Elgin Marbles as well as to botanical subjects.<sup>97</sup>

Figure 3.13 R. R. Reinagle's geometrical demonstrations contained within Select Committee proceedings of 1835-6.

Reinagle's plan for the simple improvement of form, as it was apparent in ancient artefacts and botanical study, was also mentioned by Mr. Edward Cowper in the evidence preceding Reinagle's own. Cowper suggested that the artist's lecture on the evolution of an oval<sup>98</sup> into other more elegant forms could also be used to create three-dimensional objects and suggested that it would have aided the workmen employed in the Lowesby terracotta works.<sup>99</sup> The witness pointed out how they had had difficulty in recognising the qualities of elegant form and gave the example of figures 3 and 4 in the sheet of designs that was reprinted in the Select Committee proceedings (see Figure 3.14 overleaf).

Although figure 3 he suggested "...is something of a better form... the workman

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<sup>97</sup> SC36 q. 605, pp. 51-53.

<sup>98</sup> William Hogarth had noted that the oval was to be preferred to the circle as a starting point because it could be adapted to represent objects that were seen at slightly abstruse angles, as opposed to head on (such as a woman's head). This was understood to be more elegant (Hogarth *The Analysis of Beauty* 1753, p. 23).

<sup>99</sup> SC36 q. 586, p. 49.



was left to make his own cover, and you see he has put on the top of a tolerably formed vase a hideous cover”.<sup>100</sup>

Figure 3.14 Lowesby Works design for terracotta pots, included in Mr. Edward Cowper’s evidence from the proceedings of the 1835-6 Select Committee.

Thus form also referred to the sculptural shape of three-dimensional products and as such was particularly pertinent to manufactures. Two witnesses made this distinction between the form of a composition *on* an object and the object’s form itself. John Martin noted that although the designs of Wedgwood were made “...of the commonest materials, we are delighted by the forms. Painting will only interfere with the beauty of the form when it is very excellent”.<sup>101</sup> Martin went on to note that he had “...beautiful pieces of china in form disfigured by bad painting; in consequence of that, I have my china generally without any painting, as I like the form undisturbed...”.<sup>102</sup> This witness thus identified that the two aspects of design could be separated out. Similarly the architect Charles Robert Cockerell was also asked about the ceramic industry, in response he explained:

First of all, I conceive the beauty of the porcelain must depend upon its form, and its contrivance; for instance, the works from China, in which we see animals introduced, not only with a view to ornament, but for real utility, as handles, feet, &c., as also in the antique vessels in pottery or bronze, we constantly observe an admirable adjustment of such useful and ornamental portions of the work, full of taste and meaning; and

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> SC35 q. 930, p. 65.

<sup>102</sup> SC35 q. 931, p. 65.

secondly, the beauty of porcelain must depend upon the arrangement of the design, and colours painted upon it.<sup>103</sup>

This description of form in both Cockerell and Martin's testimony is interesting to note because the qualities that are identified such as the importance of plainness in opposition to the confusion of pattern and form, as well as the centrality of utility in deciding the form are visible in the work of Felix Summerly (i.e. Henry Cole) some years later (Figure 3.15).

Figure 3.15 Felix Summerly (pseudonym of Henry Cole), pieces from the tea and coffee service, Minton 1846.

Thus form as an ideal was conceived by the witnesses to be derived from its fitness of purpose; 'fitness' being a word used by Hogarth but derived from the Classical painter Parrhasius.<sup>104</sup> This was Hogarth's first criterion for defining beauty and he described it as the established size of an object derived over years of its design. This could mean anything from a ship of which "...the dimensions of every part are confin'd and regulated by fitness for sailing", to the human body whose "...general dimensions of the parts of the human body are adapted thus to the uses they are design'd for".<sup>105</sup>

The utility of decoration in form was also explored by the engineer James Nasmyth who noted that in effect when one understands the scientific purpose of the machinery one is designing, then the form will be graceful almost by default. He suggested that:

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<sup>103</sup> SC35 q. 1445, pp. 102-3.

<sup>104</sup> Hogarth *The Analysis of Beauty* 1753, p. xii.

<sup>105</sup> *ibid.*, p. 14.



In the majority of instances, the most economical disposition of the materials coincides with such a form as presents the most elegant appearance to the eye; this is especially the case where the elliptic or parabolic curves are employed in the form of the parts which connect one part of the machine with the other, so that when viewed as one design it shall present a perfectly graceful form, and at the same time completely attain the object in view. The knowledge of its application is only to be acquired by instruction communicated to the mechanic in the arts of design in connexion with mechanical science.<sup>106</sup>

Thus like Cockerell and Hogarth, Nasmyth believed that graceful form arose from an understanding of the purpose of the object that was being designed.

## Botanical Accuracy

Several witnesses identify the importance of botanical accuracy and many are questioned as to the appropriateness of a botanical garden for the use of workers involved in the ceramics and textile industries in particular.<sup>107</sup> For the witnesses on the Select Committee it seems that botanical accuracy was particularly important and that this was understood to demand an empiricism akin to a Baconian approach that was favoured in emerging scientific societies. For example the demand that plants should be actively observed was particularly important, and in the minutes of the Botanical Society of London (est. 1836), it was suggested that there must be study of "...the actual specimens in proof of its reality or truth".<sup>108</sup> This careful observation was also required of the designer. James Skene, the secretary for the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures in Scotland, rather scathingly commented that "...in this country, when they do make patterns, which is not very often, they take any book of travels containing flowers, which may or may not be correct".<sup>109</sup> Similarly James Crabb noted that when comparing an English and a French pattern for a paper border, it was the French design that was invariably the most exquisite simply because of the botanical accuracy. Showing two such designs to the Committee he noted that "[i]n the English pattern, the leaves are not those of the flower,

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<sup>106</sup> SC36 q. 294, p. 28.

<sup>107</sup> See for example the questioning of James Skene SC35 q. 1163, p. 84.

<sup>108</sup> Linnæan Society Archives. Botanical Society Minute Book, 29 November 1844.

<sup>109</sup> SC35 q. 1159, p. 84.

which is an inaccuracy that we never find in the French; they use the leaves of each respective plant with the finest possible effect".<sup>110</sup> Crabb then went on to suggest that as regards colour, the study of the actual plant was also important.<sup>111</sup>

Figure 3.16 Barr, Flight and Barr porcelain urn painted by George Baxter showing design of shells, c. 1810.

In contrast to this though strengthening the same view, the factory inspector Mr. Thomas Jones Howell, reported that the china decorators in Worcester studied from nature because he had seen them drawing directly from feathers in the workshop.<sup>112</sup> The powerful results of this type of empirical study can be seen in figure 3.16, which shows a detail of Worcester porcelain from c.1815. The depiction of shells gives a clear sense of the object having been directly studied by the china painter. This particular piece was painted by the well-known china decorator and Royal Academician George Baxter who was identified during the Select Committee as a superior designer by Robert Stothard.<sup>113</sup>

It is also interesting to note on this subject that Jones Howell suggested that a lecture by John Constable in the town had been particularly well attended by the artisans in the porcelain factories of Chamberlain and Barr, Flight and Barr.<sup>114</sup> Again perhaps Constable may have urged the direct observation of nature, which was so apparent in his own works (see for example figure 3.17 overleaf). Furthermore Constable was recognised for depicting not simply nature but the

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<sup>110</sup> SC35 q. 1055, p. 74.

<sup>111</sup> SC35 q. 1057, p. 74.

<sup>112</sup> SC36 q. 87, p. 12.

<sup>113</sup> SC36 q. 264, p. 26. Cushion *Pottery and Porcelain Tablewares* 1976, pp. 106-107.

<sup>114</sup> SC36 q. 77, p. 11.



identifiable landscape of Britain and this is identified as an important quality by other witnesses.<sup>115</sup>

Figure 3.17 Study of Poppies, oil on paper with brown paper, John Constable 1832.

David Hay urged the direct observation of nature to be essential, noting that “...I consider it a mistaken idea that ornamental designers will be produced by setting young men to copy statues or pieces of sculptured ornament, however could they may be”, and he goes on to suggest that even “common weeds that grow in such profusion by our hedge-rows and road-sides” were worthy of close examination.<sup>116</sup> This source echoed qualities of George Bullock’s work, a designer mentioned by the Select Committee witness James Morrison.<sup>117</sup> Bullock similarly embraced not simply botanical accuracy, but a close observation and indeed a celebration of native British plants; in this he was posthumously noted as believing their structures to be “...equal to the Grecian”.<sup>118</sup> Again, this is echoed by Hay who notes in his 1836 text that “...hemlock, fern, nettle, are all worthy of your study. For these the richest and most effective of gothic ornaments were taken by our forefathers”.<sup>119</sup> Figure 3.18 overleaf shows an image of George Bullock’s work illustrating the cabinet maker’s use of more

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<sup>115</sup> Walker *Constable* 1991, pp.110-111.

<sup>116</sup> SC36 q. 430, p. 39. He also notes this in his book (Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, p. 63).

<sup>117</sup> SC35 q. 182, p. 14.

<sup>118</sup> Quoted in Levy “George Bullock” 1987, p. 425.

<sup>119</sup> *op cit.*, p. 67.

natural looking plant forms, as opposed to those derived from Greek designs (see for example Figure 3.25 in the next section). Bullock's furniture seemed to be a fusion of Classical simplicity with a grandeur derived from styles more associated with native production, such as the Jacobean and Elizabethan.<sup>120</sup> These were made in native British woods and marbles<sup>121</sup> and it is interesting to note how the fashion for botanical accuracy was also associated with a growing emergence and celebration of Britishness that was extended in the Victorian era. As was noted in Chapter 1, this was a trend that emerged with Gothicism.

Figure 3.18 Wood cabinet with inlaid decoration, George Bullock c.1815.

Botanical accuracy as regards the details of the plants and flowers in design appeared not to have been the only reason for examining actual plants, and in fact Noel St. Leon a wallpaper designer, considered that workers should not be particularly interested in the science of botany. Rather, it was the display within nature of "...form, colour and grouping" that made a study of actual plants important.<sup>122</sup> Again, this was echoed by James Crabb who explained that a study of botany allowed the designer to "...get more beautiful lines, more original effects and finer forms than you do by any other means".<sup>123</sup> Similarly the architect Thomas Leverton Donaldson noted that workers should be instructed in botany:

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<sup>120</sup> Levy "George Bullock" 1987, p. 425.

<sup>121</sup> Bullock owned his own quarry in Anglesey (Ibid., pp. 425-426).

<sup>122</sup> SC36 q. 378, p. 36.

<sup>123</sup> SC35 q. 1078, pp. 75-76.



...as connected with construction, in order to give a workman an insight into the nature and properties of vegetable substances, and a more accurate knowledge of their forms when he wishes to delineate or model them; all which may be very much derived from a knowledge of their growth and formation.<sup>124</sup>

These ideas were no doubt drawn from the tradition of copying foliage (and particularly the raffle leaf) in drawing manuals of the eighteenth-century, such as Matthius Lock's *The Principles of Ornament, or the Youth's Guide to Drawing from Foliage* (c.1768).<sup>125</sup>

Here then, the witnesses are defining exactly how botanical accuracy would produce good design. Firstly through showing harmonious colour, secondly by giving natural looking grouping and forms and thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, by providing a knowledge of the structure and growth patterns of a plant to allow the creation of a logical composition, one that did not violate the rules of nature itself.<sup>126</sup> Again, this scientific understanding could be considered as offering a profound meaning to the design.

## Archaeological Study

It is clear that archaeological study was of immense importance to the understanding of good design. As with botanical investigation this was thought to prevent the whimsy of imagination that had seemed so wrong in forms of design such as that of the Louis XV and the Chinese styles. The majority of the examples given in the Select Committee are reliant on a close observation of archaeological designs, particularly those from Greek and Roman sources. The work resulting from these analyses ranges from relatively close copies of Classical forms to the general embrace of the principles and motifs of Classical style. These two approaches are visible in the work of John Henning Junior whose production was highlighted as a supreme example of design. Figure 3.19

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<sup>124</sup> SC36 q. 343, p. 32.

<sup>125</sup> Puetz "Design Instruction for Artisans..." 1999, pp. 225-226.

<sup>126</sup> As Hay claimed about the students that were going to read his text "She [Nature] shall be their instructor; for all that I can pretend to do is to point out to them a practical mode of receiving her lessons" (Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, p. 63).

shows his relief produced for Decimus Burton on the Hyde Park Corner gateway. This design was reliant on the aid of his father John Henning Senior who had studied the Elgin Marbles as was noted in Chapter 1. Henning Senior's role was identified in relation to the original Marbles as one in which he had laboured to fill "...up the defects which had been created in the frieze of the Parthenon", i.e. he had 'repaired' the frieze in an almost archaeological reconstruction.<sup>127</sup> From this Henning Junior had taken his inspiration, though he had not made an exact copy from his father's studies.<sup>128</sup> Figure 3.20 overleaf shows a far more abstracted Classical design that was completed in 1840 again by John Henning Junior; this was referred to in the proceedings of 1836 by George J. Morant as an example of

Figure 3.19 Hyde Park Corner frieze, John Henning Jnr c.1827.

superior design.<sup>129</sup> Henning produced a series of plaster medallions surrounded by figures and decoration, combining elements of the Baroque and the Classical.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> This was the questioner's phrasing (SC35 q. 879, p. 61).

<sup>128</sup> Whinney *Sculpture in Britain* 1964, p. 210.

<sup>129</sup> SC36 q. 543, p. 46.

<sup>130</sup> Yorke "The work of John Henning Junior at Stafford House" 1999, p. 44.



Figure 3.20 Detail of one of the plaster medallions of Bartolomé Esteban Murillo by John Henning Jnr. for the gallery at Stafford House, 1840.

That the basis of Classicism should be empirical observation from actual archaeological sources would appear to have derived from the writings of Johann Joachim Winckelmann in particular, whom Ian Jenkins (1992) claims was “...the theorist who would exert the greatest influence on the nineteenth century”.<sup>131</sup> In his two texts from the eighteenth-century, *Reflections on the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*<sup>132</sup> (1755) and *History of Ancient Art*<sup>133</sup> (1764), he established (respectively) the theory that good taste had been created by the Greeks<sup>134</sup> and, importantly, a clear chronology of Greek styles, which he claimed showed “...the origin, progress, change and downfall of art”.<sup>135</sup> Thus the implication was that Greek art had been the peak of artistic and tasteful production, a judgement implying that the learning of its principles would signal a return to the truest form of art. If one were to consider again the concept of the 1835-6 period eye then as was noted by Baxandall, its categories are often more pronounced if they have been consciously constructed and learned.<sup>136</sup> Thus it appears that Winckelmann played a key role in providing principles and even the vocabulary that could be imbibed by scholar or amateur alike. Jenkins explains:

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<sup>131</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, pp. 20-21.

<sup>132</sup> *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Mahlerei und Bildhauer-Kunst*.

<sup>133</sup> *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*.

<sup>134</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 26.

<sup>135</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>136</sup> Baxandall *Painting and Experience* 1988, p. 37.

The especial importance of Winckelmann for the rise of Classical scholarship...lies in the fact that he was the first to work up the ancient commentaries...into a 'modern' system of criticism, marrying the literary tradition of art theory to the monuments themselves. In so doing he established an empirical scheme for discussing the development of ancient sculpture within the traditional literary and philosophical framework.<sup>137</sup>

Winckelmann's engagement with Classical sources was particularly centred on the importance of the 'ideal' in art, a concept that he and later writers such as Joshua Reynolds considered to be derived purely from the mind.<sup>138</sup> There was in this concept a sense of the existence of a form that transcended and pre-existed that which could be observed in the actual world, an idea first expounded by Plato in his *Republic*.<sup>139</sup> However, in opposition to Plato's understanding of ideal beauty (which the philosopher considered was impossible to reproduce), Winckelmann followed other Classical scholars who believed that it was indeed possible to recreate this ideal beauty in art.<sup>140</sup>

For the scholar, sculptor and painter of the 1830s, Winckelmann offered another form of empiricism that would educate the artist to understand the truest form of art - this was by studying the output of the Greek sculptors themselves. At the basis of most of the artists' studies who were named as providing superior design during the Select Committee, lay the detailed observation of Greek and Roman art. Many artists went to Italy (where some of the greatest Greek treasures were, such as the Apollo Belvedere and the Laocoön group<sup>141</sup>) and studied there for some years. George Morant explained how he had been urged by Sir Thomas Lawrence to:

...undertake a journey to Italy, which I did, for the sole purpose of endeavouring to perfect myself in every thing connected with the arts; and I found great benefit in having had access to the various galleries of

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<sup>137</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, p. 22.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., pp. 20-22.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>141</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 25. The Laocoön Group was unearthed in 1506 in the ruins of the Baths of Titus, and acquired by Pope Julius II (Calvesi *Treasures of the Vatican* 1962, p. 125).



pictures, and other objects of art, which I think tend greatly to improve and to cultivate the arts.<sup>142</sup>

For those artists it was essential that the truth of Greek art should be observed in as minute a detail as was apparent in Winckelmann's analysis of the sculpture.<sup>143</sup> Here, just as with botanical study, it was important to see the work with one's own eyes if possible. Henry Sass emphasised that it was ultimately this personal engagement with Classical art that gave subtlety to an artist's understanding of grace and form.<sup>144</sup> There are many examples given of good design because they reveal this archaeological accuracy. In particular three interior design firms were famously associated with the intimate knowledge of Classical archaeology – Thomas Hope, Robert Adam and Percier and Fontaine, all of whom were named as producing examples of superior design in the Select Committee.

Figure 3.21 Rundell, Bridge and Rundell (Paul Storr), adapted from T. Hope's *Household Furniture and Decoration* (1812-13).

Hope produced a very influential book called *Household Furniture and Decoration* (1807) that recommended a staunchly defined Classical style that, like the work of John Bacon for Coade and Sealy (see Chapter 4), bridged the two worlds of fine art and interior design. This text developed from the transformation of his home in Duchess Street (off Portland Place), and illustrated

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<sup>142</sup> SC36 q. 503, p. 44.

<sup>143</sup> "He [Winckelmann] continues with a fulsome account of each part of the body, expressing a langorous enjoyment of each detail" (Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 29).

<sup>144</sup> SC36 q. 239, pp. 23-4.

his application of a series of styles including Egyptian, Indian, Greek and Roman by which he had turned the house into a work of art, combining "...literary, poetical... narrative as well as archaeological" elements.<sup>145</sup> His vision was of a total and unifying scheme that incorporated elements such as domestic costume, metal-ware and ceramics, as well as the more obvious drapery and furniture (see also Figure 4.13 in the next chapter). The book was in turn used as inspiration by manufacturers, and figure 3.21 on the previous page shows a dessert stand made by Paul Storr for Rundell, Bridge and Rundell, that took its design from Hope's text.<sup>146</sup> Similar to the other examples given in this chapter, the object combines an imaginative version of Classicism with an almost scientific approach to archaeology, anatomy and botanical detailing. Other similar schemes mentioned by the Select Committee witnesses were those of Robert Adam,<sup>147</sup> and Percier and Fontaine.<sup>148</sup> Figures 3.22 and 3.23 overleaf show examples of these designers' work and as can be gleaned from the images there was again in this selection a bias towards the Classical.

Robert Adam established a business with his brothers after returning from the Grand Tour in 1758, and was commissioned by the Duke of Northumberland to decorate three of his houses.<sup>149</sup> His client was particularly knowledgeable about the Classical style and the decoration of the houses seems to reflect an attention to detail that was again almost archaeological.<sup>150</sup> As Iain Gordon Brown (1992) notes in his article of Adam, there was a complex relationship between 'archaeological truth' and 'picturesque vision' in the eighteenth-century in particular, and this was visible in Adam's book published in 1764 *Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro in Dalmantia*.<sup>151</sup> Brown explains

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<sup>145</sup> Turner *The Dictionary of Art* 1998, pp. 744-745, vol. 14. For a full outline of the rooms see Thornton & Watkin "New Light on the Hope Mansion in Duchess Street" 1987, pp. 162-177.

<sup>146</sup> V&A collections database.

<sup>147</sup> Monsieur Claude Guillotte SC35 q. 838, p. 57.

<sup>148</sup> John B. Papworth SC35 q. 1293, p. 94.

<sup>149</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 95.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>151</sup> This was a fortified city-palace at Split (former Yugoslavia). The text had drawings produced by Charles-Louis Clérissieu (Brown "The Picturesque Vision" 1992, p. 76).



Figure 3.22 Section of the Etruscan Room, Osterley Park, Middlesex c.1775-6, Robert Adam.

Figure 3.23 Plate from Percier & Fontaine's *Recueil de Décorations Intérieures* 1812 edition.

that “[i]t is clear that fancy played a part in the search for truth in what was actually an exercise in imaginative restoration”.<sup>152</sup> The same combination of scientific knowledge and invention is visible in another Middlesex commission that the Adams’ company undertook for the banker Robert Child. Figure 3.22 shows the ‘Etruscan room’, and demonstrates the attention to detail in furnishings and colourings in a similar way to that later favoured by Thomas Hope. The ‘Adam Style’ was particularly characterised by a concern with the overall design of a room or an entire house, where all elements were in harmony with each other, as Hay had demanded.

The designs of Percier and Fontaine were outlined in their second book *Recueil de Décorations Intérieures* that was published in 1801, with a larger edition produced in 1812. Again, similar to the work of Thomas Hope, the designers offered their patterns as examples that could be followed by manufacturers and the aim of their entire text was to promote “...the principles of taste that we have derived from antiquity”.<sup>153</sup> This John B. Papworth conceded, had made Charles Percier and P. F. L. Fontaine “...highly useful to the manufacturing arts of their

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Quoted in Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 368.

Percier and P. F. L. Fontaine “...highly useful to the manufacturing arts of their own country and elsewhere”.<sup>154</sup> Again, as can be seen in figure 3.23, Percier and Fontaine’s designs embraced the more lyrical style that was visible in Adam’s Etruscan room. The designs seem to combine both figurative elements with recognisable motifs of Classicism, such as the Etruscan urn or garland swags (see also Figure 3.3 earlier in this chapter).

Like the modellers learning from the Elgin Marbles, these designers drew from other archaeological discoveries and particularly those that were at Pompeii and Herculaneum, as well as the sixteenth-century work by Raphael in the Vatican Loggia. These two sources for design ‘schemes’, in particular that of the Pompeii remains, were frequently identified by the witnesses as key examples of good design.<sup>155</sup> Yet although it was possible as today to visit the remains (though it was becoming harder to gain permission to study them<sup>156</sup>), publications provided a more convenient source of information on the subject both for the general public and manufacturers, who were less likely to see the ruins at first hand. For example, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge published two volumes on Pompeii in their Library of Entertaining Knowledge series (1831-2), which were skilfully illustrated by the architect William Clarke. Sir John Dean Paul suggested that the creations by Raphael in the Vatican Loggie, should similarly be reproduced in order to offer a complete training in the higher arts for those in towns like Liverpool, Manchester or Newcastle, locations whose population he considered was unlikely to see the actual works in person.<sup>157</sup> As can be seen in the illustrations of Storr’s, Adams’ and Percier and Fontaine’s designs, the Pompeii style is demonstrated through the repeated motif of the arabesque motif with its combination of festoons, swags and figures.

As was noted in the Chapter 1 architectural examples of the Classical style in London and in other British cities were numerous. Witnesses point to some of these developments as examples of good design, such as Robert Butt. When questioned Butt explained that British metal ware was successful in two main

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<sup>154</sup> SC35 q. 1293, p. 94.

<sup>155</sup> In the testimony of James Crabb, Henry Sass and Sir John Dean Paul.

<sup>156</sup> Gell *Pompeiana* 1832, p. ix.

<sup>157</sup> SC36 q. 2068, p. 173.



areas - work appearing at the top end of the market sold to wealthy customers, and architectural ironwork that was made in vast quantities.<sup>158</sup>

Figure 3.24 Regent's Park development, John Nash showing railings taken from *The Smith and Founder's Director* L. N. Cottingham, 1824.

In *The Smith and Founder's Director* of 1824, it was noted that there was a marked improvement in this latter area of production which, according to its author L. N. Cottingham, had seen a change from the "...merely gross and ponderous, into the scale of ornamental embellishment, in which utility and security are united with the lightness and elegance of classical design".<sup>159</sup> The popularity of this decoration in cast iron, must also have been affected by the extensive building programme that was going on in London during the early nineteenth-century, particularly the Regent's Park development by John Nash.<sup>160</sup> This was only one element of Nash's ambitious scheme for creating a "...daring and highly picturesque... garden city for... aristocracy", that took place during the years of 1811-1835,<sup>161</sup> but it must have been particularly pertinent to the business of Howell & James who were part of this development, having their premises in the new Regent's Street.<sup>162</sup> Figure 3.24 shows one of these new developments with an ornamental ironwork design from Cottingham's text.

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<sup>158</sup> SC35 qq. 557-562, pp. 38-39.

<sup>159</sup> Cottingham *The Smith and Founder's Director* 1824, in preface, pages not numbered.

<sup>160</sup> Robertson & Robertson *Cast Iron Decoration* 1994, pp. 38-39.

<sup>161</sup> Summerson *Georgian London* 1945, p. 161.

<sup>162</sup> Number 9 (Pigot *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 209).

Figure 3.25 Hyde Park Railings from Henry Shaw's *Examples of Ornamental Metal Work* 1836.

Also in relation to the medium of cast iron, Butt mentions more specifically the gates leading to Buckingham Palace from Hyde Park corner, which he notes were "...remarkably beautiful".<sup>163</sup> Figure 3.25 shows an illustration of these gates that was published in 1836 drawn (and engraved) by Henry Shaw as part of a collection of examples of superior ornamental metalwork.<sup>164</sup> The design of the gates shows the influence of Classical style anthemion and acanthus leaves, which gives the gates a solidity more reminiscent of Greek architecture and its repetition of columns, a quality enhanced by the massive stone 'piers' in which the gates were set.<sup>165</sup>

## Narrative or *Istoria*

Figure 3.26 overleaf shows a Chinoiserie style plate produced in the eighteenth-century in Liverpool, an object that helps to introduce one of the key concepts of good design, the idea of a coherent narrative or *istoria*. The plate is an English copy of a Delft version after an original Chinese object, which explains the problems that the English painter clearly had with understanding the narrative that must have been contained in the original, as the extruded transmission of

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<sup>163</sup> SC35 q. 595, p. 41.

<sup>164</sup> *Examples of Ornamental Metal Work Drawn and Engraved by Henry Shaw* (1836), London: William Pickering.

<sup>165</sup> Robertson & Robertson *Cast Iron Decoration* 1994, p. 43.



design has rendered the pattern virtually incomprehensible.<sup>166</sup> The decoration of the plate seems superfluous and awkward, particularly in the portrayal of space and the relationship between the figures depicted, and this lack of clear narrative can be seen in contrast to Flaxman's drawings of Homeric scenes (Figure 3.8). It was this apparent deficiency in Chinese design that lead the witness Samuel Wiley, to describe the style as "...unmeaning", a term clarified by considering later comment involving the Chinese style.<sup>167</sup>

Figure 3.26 Porcelain plate from Liverpool c.1725-50.

In 1845 *Punch* published a comment on the teaching of the Government Normal School of Design using the image of a fragmented Willow Pattern plate (instead of the fragment of the Elgin Marbles). In so doing, it becomes apparent that the Chinese style was still being used to signify bad design in the later part of the nineteenth-century (see figure 3.27 overleaf).<sup>168</sup> The use of the Chinese style as an example of inferior design was also apparent in a later speech delivered at the inception of the first School of Art in Wolverhampton. Here the Reverend J. B. Owen commented:

[w]ould it be no deliverance to get rid of that everlasting blue-bottled willow pattern from our crockery, with a dejected Chinaman sitting on that isolated bridge, that equally puzzled us to conceive how he got on it

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<sup>166</sup> Ray *English Delftware* 2000, p. 50.

<sup>167</sup> SC35 q. 774, p. 53.

<sup>168</sup> Baker & Richardson *A Grand Design* 1997, p. 116.

or how he could get off. There were many violations of the rule of art and common sense...<sup>169</sup>

Clearly this quote echoes Wiley's comment to the Select Committee and strengthens the sense that Chinese decoration was literally understood to have no meaning due to its graphic system, which seemed to dramatically jar with any familiar structure that would allow one to 'read' a painting in the West. This not only indicated that there was a lack of perspective and inconsistencies in the portrayal of geography and architecture, but also something else – incoherence in the designed narrative.

Figure 3.27 Cartoon of The School of Bad Design at Somerset House from *Punch*, September 1845.

This important artistic quality was outlined in John Gould's introduction to *Biographical Sketches of Eminent Artists* from 1834. He noted that good art was only that which displayed a "...unity of design" which he explained as being "...the connexion of the subordinate figures with the principal one".<sup>170</sup> This he qualified further as being reliant on "...the discovery and selection of such objects, and such probably incidental circumstances as, combined together, may

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<sup>169</sup> Quoted in Cooksey & Webb in Bowler *New Glass Economy* 1999, p. 43. I am indebted to Jane Cooksey for the discovery of this quote which comes from her Doctoral research on the history of art education in Wolverhampton.

<sup>170</sup> Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, pp. iii-iv.



best tend to develope [sic.] the story”.<sup>171</sup> Thus Gould’s understanding of good design in art was that in which all elements of the painting, whether apparently inconsequential or not, combined together to make the narrative obvious and immediate to the viewer, a quality that could not be considered as a characteristic of the Liverpool plate.

The requirement that there should be an underlying sense of purpose to a painting, where the cause and its effects created a unified design, is a traditional one. In his text *De pictura (On Painting)* from 1436, Leon Battista Alberti had described the harmony of a painting based on the cause of the scene as an essential component of good art. He termed it the ‘istoria’, noting that “...whatever the painted persons do among themselves or with the beholder, all is pointed towards ornamenting or teaching the *istoria*”.<sup>172</sup> Thus it is apparent that within the concept of good design in fine art according to Gould, lay the traditional Albertian understanding that narrative should be immediately readable, through the representation of the cause of the scene.

This could be interpreted literally as a criterion for manufactures that incorporated fine art-style design, such as landscape and figurative scenes, but I would suggest that it was also a criterion for non-figurative design through a similar process. To understand the way that an actual species of plant grew, how it was structured and perhaps even its habitat, was to understand in effect the *cause* of its appearance. Thus in a similar way to the *istoria* in fine art, the scientific understanding of a plant would similarly provide the logic that would guarantee the harmonisation of the entire design. The same idea could be applied to the rules of colouring, which when drawn directly from nature provided a scientific logic that would again guarantee the success of a pattern. Furthermore, perhaps this could also be considered in relation to archaeological study.

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Alberti *On Painting* 1966, p. 78.

Figure 3.28 Can, cup and saucer in white jasper ware with Lady Templetown's 'Domestic Employment' 1790.

But how did *istoria* relate to other objects that were not simply two-dimensional or that had two-dimensional design? Figure 3.28 shows Josiah Wedgwood's Neoclassical ware decorated by Lady Templetown's 'Domestic Employment' designs from 1790. There are several levels on which this design could be seen to exhibit good narrative or *istoria*. The forms of the objects are clearly not one of Wedgwood's copies of Classical vase forms but a range of more useful products for a domestic setting. However the simplicity of the shapes does complement Classical motifs of vine festoons, laurel, acanthus and lotus leaf detailing. Furthermore the bas-relief though again in the style of the Classical was a contemporary design that depicted in effect the setting where the objects would have been used, linking the design and the function of the objects. In this way the Wedgwood product created a three-dimensional 'unity of design', fulfilling Charles Robert Cockerell's description of good design in relation to form in ceramics. Like Samuel Wiley, Cockerell said that the correct composition of the "...useful and ornamental portions" of objects resulted in them being tasteful and meaningful.<sup>173</sup> From his discussion, it was apparent that for Cockerell this 'meaning' was the appropriateness of the form to its usage. In a similar way Thomas Sheraton had also advocated the harmony of the forms in relation to their usage, and had overtly outlined this theory in his text *The Cabinet-Maker*

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<sup>173</sup> SC35 q. 1445, pp. 102-103.



*and Upholsterer's Drawing Book*.<sup>174</sup> Puetz notes how this was similar to the ideas of Thomas Hope who:

...was to define [this quality] as 'that harmony and significance of accessories and that apt accord between the peculiar meaning of each imitative or significant detail, and the peculiar destination of the main objects to which these accessories belonged'.<sup>175</sup>

The supplying of a system of basic principles by which the skills of drawing and designing could be easily transmitted, was clearly a very attractive idea to both the members and witnesses of the Select Committee. One can take for example the interest in Richard Ramsey Reinagle's step-by-step instruction. This attracted the attention of Committee members, enough to be reprinted and to be identified in the resulting Report.<sup>176</sup> The proceeding witness Mr. Edward Cowper also believed in the benefits of such a method and claimed that Reinagle's teaching would have immediately improved the work carried out by 'designers' in his firm.<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, as has been noted in the previous discussion of bad design, the key to superior style appeared to only be achievable as a result of the application of principles. Therefore, such criteria for good design practice has been drawn out from the Select Committee proceedings by decoding the examples of superior skill, but the question remains whether this has revealed a set of principles influential at the time of the Select Committee Report's publication in 1836, or whether they remain a construction created with hindsight?

If one considers the Report itself, there are a number of recommendations for the future curriculum of any design education establishment, though they are generally rather vague. Of these, the most overt declaration of this nature is the warning that any proposed school that does not encourage the practical application of design skills, in the specialist industries chosen by the students, would be immediately redundant.<sup>178</sup> In comparison with the set of principles

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<sup>174</sup> Puetz "Design Instruction for Artizans..." 1999, p. 229.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> *Report* p. vi. See figure 3.13 of this chapter.

<sup>177</sup> *SC36* q. 586, p. 49.

<sup>178</sup> *Report* p. v.

defined in the present chapter, this comment has some similarity with the criterion of workmanship. The Report states that “[u]nless the Arts and Manufactures be practically combined... the deficiency of manufacturing-artists will not be supplied”.<sup>179</sup> In general this appears to refer broadly to the system whereby a designer, trained to understand the processes of production, is able to work more effectively with an artisan to produce good quality designs (an issue discussed in more detail in Chapter 5). This was deemed important because no matter how good a designer, his or her work would be unsuccessful if it was not carried out with “...practical accuracy”.<sup>180</sup> Yet within the Report there seems to be other motives for highlighting the principle of workmanship. In the document this particular discussion is intimately tied up with a debate as to the management structure appropriate for future schools of design. The writers hint at some uneasiness as regards proposals for a centralised system where one institution would control all. Rather, the Report claims it would be better to have fairly independent schools based around the local industries of the area, in order to prevent “...interference” from Government.<sup>181</sup> Thus the suggestion that the practical application of design should take place in the areas most associated with different industries appears to be merely a convenient method to disrupt plans for centralisation.

This lack of support for a centralised system would appear to oppose any ambition there may have been to establish a set of principles by which to guide the teaching of design. Rather the document suggests that a more individual approach is favoured, an impression strengthened later on in the Select Committee Report during the description of artistic academies. Here the writers claim that “...academic rules” prevent “...the artist from catching the feeling and spirit of the great master whom he studies”.<sup>182</sup> Instead it is suggested that education should be encouraged as a scheme of “...free competition in art”.<sup>183</sup> Clearly this refers to the management of institutions, though these comments also

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> The evidence of John B. Papworth SC35 q. 1264, p. 92.

<sup>181</sup> *Report* p. v.

<sup>182</sup> *Report* p. viii.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.



bring into question whether a principle of good design was also understood to be a stifling academic rule.

In order to tackle this problem, it is interesting to consider the other recommendations in relation to curriculum development contained within the Select Committee Report. As was noted earlier these are rather vague, but they do suggest that a principle of good design was not necessarily the same as an academic rule. This is particularly the case in the Report's recommendation of another of the criterion that has been identified in this chapter – that of archaeological study. The use of sources from archaeology is promoted by the writers when discussing the effectiveness of the medium of copper-plate illustrations in books and magazines to portray good examples of design, particularly for the education of working people.<sup>184</sup> The Report suggests that there is a definitive set of good examples, listing the designs at Pompeii, the works of Raphael and the Renaissance masters, as well as Oriental and Islamic art and architecture.<sup>185</sup> The same criterion is also judged to be of importance in the collections of museums.<sup>186</sup> Indeed so clear is the Report on the suitability of these examples of good design that it is proposed casts of "...the best specimens of sculpture might be advantageously transmitted from the metropolis to the different towns".<sup>187</sup> Thus here we have a centralised system of provision, which is not seen as a threat to creativity, though it promotes a particular principle. In this way it would seem that the issue of how any schools of design may be managed, differed from the fundamental principles of design practice, and that it was the former that would cause the stifling of ability amongst designers, whilst the latter was an essential element of tapping into their potential. This view is confirmed by the inclusion of other elements deemed important for any future provision of design education and these correspond to the principles established in this chapter – botanical accuracy, outline and form.

Based on the evidence of David Ramsey Hay, the Report suggests that the study of botany is crucial to any improvement in British design practice, noting that

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<sup>184</sup> *Report* p. vi.

<sup>185</sup> *Report* p. v. and vi.

<sup>186</sup> *Report* p. v.

<sup>187</sup> *Report* p. v.

this has been one of the strategies of French manufacturers that has kept the goods of that nation of a much higher standard generally than those in Britain.<sup>188</sup> When promoting the importance of design within a general system of education, the Report also mentions specifically the importance of form and outline, or rather an understanding of form through a concentration on outline. This is a system practiced in the "...national schools of Bavaria", the Report states, where there is "...an extension of the knowledge of form by the adoption of a bold-style of geometrical and outline-drawing...".<sup>189</sup> This statement appears to combine the criteria identified in this chapter as form, outline and perspective. The importance of a geometrical understanding is also highlighted elsewhere in the Report when the scheme suggested by James Nasmyth is noted. Nasmyth had proposed that it would be advantageous to display Classical objects in factories, so providing the workers with a visual education in the geometrical proportions on which the Classical objects were based.<sup>190</sup> This three-dimensional collection is considered in the Report to be an extension of the teaching provided by Reinagle's step-by-step guide to creating more elegant form.<sup>191</sup>

Clearly then, of the nine principles identified in this chapter, at least five (combined with a sixth - perspective) of them were mentioned within the Committee's Report, suggesting that certain criteria were apparent in 1836. The other principles of colour, narrative and anatomical accuracy (the final category that I shall be discussing in detail in the next chapter) were all established criteria of fine art practice and had been identified early on by Alberti,<sup>192</sup> later by Winckelmann<sup>193</sup> and reiterated by John Gould in his text contemporary to the Committee and dedicated to Martin Archer Shee, President of the Royal Academy and witness to the 1836 session.<sup>194</sup> Thus it is possible to suggest that such a set of principles could have been collated after the Select Committee, and

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<sup>188</sup> *Report* p. vi.

<sup>189</sup> *Report* pp. vi-vii.

<sup>190</sup> *Report* p. vi.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> The principle of narrative or *istoria* was invented by Alberti, see Alberti *On Painting* 1966, p. 78 for an example.

<sup>193</sup> On the principle of anatomical detail see Winckelmann quoted in Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, pp. 28-29 for example.

<sup>194</sup> For example John Gould uses the criteria of colour and anatomical accuracy in his analysis of the work of famous artists. See for two examples of those principles being used Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, p. ix and pp. 160-161 respectively.



indeed they may have actively been so by any reader of the original proceedings, such as Henry Cole. It is known that Cole made many notations on his copy of the Select Committee inquiry, perhaps with further study these may relate to the distillation of certain principles for the teaching of design, an issue I shall continue in the conclusion.<sup>195</sup>

However we are left with an interesting conundrum it would seem because, as I have suggested previously, design principles appear to have been favoured by the writers of the Report. Yet these criteria were written about in conjunction with the opinion that academies of art were inclined to stifle, rather than encourage flair and talent, or as the Report states "...feeling and spirit".<sup>196</sup> As we shall see in Chapter 4, this vocabulary reveals that the document writers were indebted to a well-established approach towards theorising artistic practice. This was a notion that the figure of the artist had the potential to be an insightful individual, even a genius. However the understanding of the individual creativity of a specialist would appear to jar with the concept of a principle, which as I noted in the introduction to this thesis, the Reverend William Paley's *Natural Theology* had identified. He considered the term 'principle' to be a particularly difficult concept in that it muddled the investigation of the origins of an object or phenomenon. For him to suggest that the natural world had been produced through some sort of principle seemed too vague and that, "[w]e might as well call the casting of metals a principle; we might, so far as appears to me, as well call spinning and weaving principles... these, as principles, pretend to dispense with intention, thought, contrivance, on the part of the artist...".<sup>197</sup> As such, Paley considered that the notion of a principle merely generalised an activity that he considered was in actuality carried out by a skilled and intelligent individual.

A clue to the apparent contradiction of favouring principles of design in tandem with support for the traditional notion of individual creativity, contained within the Select Committee Report, can perhaps be found by reconsidering the implications of one of the main conclusions of this chapter. This is the reiteration

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<sup>195</sup> I am indebted to Professor Edward Bird for this information. He is currently undertaking detailed research on Henry Cole.

<sup>196</sup> *Report* p. viii.

<sup>197</sup> Paley quoted in Gillespie 1990, p. 221.

of the relationship between moral behaviour symbolised by one's choice of design style and the rules of social interaction that were explored in Chapter 1. As was noted in that and the present chapter, it is clear that to define principles in design was to infer the rules of social order. This was a particularly important aspect of 'design' as a principle because it is clear that the Benthamites took the task of rebuilding societal structure in order that it would function more profitably (in both economic and social terms) very seriously, therefore both design and behavioural principles were important. As such, the outcome of any Benthamite intervention was intended to create profitability and success which in terms of art, the witnesses and previous scholars had believed could only be achieved through individual, studio-based tutoring as had occurred in the Renaissance in particular.<sup>198</sup> Thus, perhaps what was being developed within the Select Committee inquiry was a new model of design practice both in terms of manufactures and more general philosophy, one that was to shape later developments in theory and practice.

The next two chapters will attempt to explore this new model, but by way of introduction another consideration of the conclusions that have been drawn in this chapter is necessary. The actual identification of principles of design has provided not simply a general sense of the crossover between design and political practice, but has also provided clues as to its mechanics, which may in turn provide a way into the study of a Benthamite model of design. Of particular interest are two qualities to emerge from a consideration of these criteria as a whole – the idea of seeing real objects through an empiricism akin to scientific study, and the concept of the *istoria*, the structure of the cause of a scene.

According to the Select Committee proceedings, there was a sense that to learn perspective was to simultaneously learn to see a real object in the right way, and this ability to view correctly effectively lies at the heart of scientific empiricism. Furthermore, as an education in perspective also allowed one to better communicate one's views on a graphic level, so the use of correct methodology is thought to guarantee the same in science. The emphasis on the science of

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<sup>198</sup> See for example the testimony of Gustave Friedrich Waagen, particularly SC35 q. 95, p. 7.



perspective therefore provides a bridge between scientific method and design, an important link for outlining a Benthamite model. But in addition to seeing correctly, good design was also characterised by the reproduction of the *istoria*. This meant that in using perspective, one was not simply seeing the real surface of a real object, but rather a student was able to understand its intimate and invisible structure; a skill that allowed one to portray the object more correctly. In effect then one was seeing a deeper and more profound reality. Importantly, this *istoria* principle was similar whether one was decorating a ceramic form with a group of flowers or whether one was designing the form itself. Good floral design exhibited a knowledge of the invisible growth of the flowers being depicted, i.e. the cause of their appearance, and form demonstrated evidence of its fitness for the purpose for which it was intended; this was similarly the cause of its existence. It was fundamentally these two qualities that lay at the foundation of the debates surrounding the appropriate model of the designer (both for manufactures and for society) that took place between the Benthamites and other members and witnesses on the Select Committee. And it is perhaps these two mechanisms that provide the key to the conundrum of how design principles were considered and how they may have combined to form a new model of design practice. This was because although both perspective and *istoria* were simultaneously characteristics of fine art as well as science, the implications for the designer utilising the varying methods differed greatly. In the following chapters this complex series of similarities and differences within the inherent approaches to the world in art and science will be explored by their approaches towards the human form and the idea of invention.

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# Chapter 4

## The Human Body and Design

Having considered the other categories of superior design as they were outlined in the Select Committee proceedings, highlighting two important elements from these - the use of perspective and the *istoria*, the present chapter moves on to explore the most prominent quality of superior design identified within the inquiry – the reproduction of the human form. The chapter begins by analysing examples of artists' work given in the Select Committee and considers them in relation to two criteria – the combination of the ideal and the natural in the rendering of the human body, and the ability of the superior artist to “breathe life” into a representation of human form. This latter aspect is focussed on and considered in relation to the traditional understanding of the fine artist as the possessor of *ingenium*, an apparently instinctive artistic ability. The chapter then moves on to explore the mechanics of this elusive quality by considering the Neoplatonic form thought to be encapsulated by Classical design. Yet the search does not end here. Beyond Classicism was a deeper, more real archetype lying beneath its surface – this was thought to be written in the language of geometry.

The chapter goes on to explore how geometry was conceived as the basis not only of art but of the man-made factory and the natural world, noting the role that the human form played in this system. For the witnesses on the Select Committee the body revealed the key to this greater universal language of geometry, and as such the Select Committee testimony reverberates with the Vitruvian tradition in which humankind, architecture and the universe were linked by a geometrical harmony that formed a micro-macrocosm. Renaissance Neoplatonism is therefore discussed and is found to further empower the role of the artist in his or her reproduction of both the human body and the entire scene, elevating them to a god-like status. The chapter concludes by considering the role of dissection in this tradition, outlining the extent of the practice among artists and theorists in both the Renaissance period and in the early nineteenth-century.

## The Ideal and the Natural

The Select Committee proceedings provide much discussion on the representation of the human form. The following examples are those provided by the witnesses during both of the Committee sessions, and the section focuses on two main issues arising from the evidence, which are central to beginning to explore the relationship between scientific and artistic models. These are the importance of a combination of the ideal and the naturalistic in the production of figures; and the mark of a superior designer as one who can imbue representation of the human form with a certain feeling or energy.

Figure 4.1 Studies of feet from the South Parthenon Frieze, Benjamin Robert Haydon 1811.

The Elgin Marbles were considered by many and Benjamin Robert Haydon in particular, to exhibit a quality that had previously not been considered as a characteristic of Greek art. This was a naturalism visible in the figures of warriors and horses that appeared to be the result of the direct observation of nature.<sup>1</sup> In his evidence John Henning Senior described the importance of choosing the right material for the reproduction of the Marbles in order to capture the naturalistic detail of the "...veins and other minute work" that they contained.<sup>2</sup> Thus the lesson that Haydon abstracted from the sculptures of the Parthenon frieze was that one should "[a]lways make an actual study... to get the

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<sup>1</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, pp. 24-5. Cummings "Phidias in Bloomsbury" 1964, pp. 323-328.

<sup>2</sup> SC35 q. 870, pp. 60-61.



look of nature, *then idealise*, but always with actual nature as the basis”.<sup>3</sup> Figure 4.1 shows a series of studies of feet that Haydon made from the Southern part of the Parthenon frieze and this was used by him as a guide to comparative studies he made of actual feet as well as those in other sculptures.<sup>4</sup>

Johann Winckelmann considered that the naturalism apparent in Greek sculpture derived from the lifestyle of the Greeks themselves because the artists and scholars were constantly reminded of the beauty of human forms in the gymnasia of Greece. Here they:

...could watch completely naked youths at their exercises, in a range of postures far more varied and genuine than could ever be reproduced by a model hired to pose in a modern academy.<sup>5</sup>

This same point was identified during the Select Committee in the testimony of Henry Sass the art teacher, who also explained that the Greek sculptors had had the advantage of seeing the “...living figure naked always before them”.<sup>6</sup> Because of this he considered they were able to “...select from a number of forms, and produce that fine form that exists in their statues”.<sup>7</sup> As is clear from Sass’s comments, the observation of the human form was not simply in order to study one body and represent it in stone, rather the beauty of Greek sculpture was derived from the examination of many bodies from which was drawn a synthesis, creating a single form known as the ‘ideal’.

As was noted in Chapter 3, the ideal was a concept that Winckelmann had drawn from Plato’s *Republic* and it is crucial to considering the approaches to invention in particular inherent within scientific and artistic practice. The term ‘ideal’ denoted a metaphysical form that transcended and pre-existed that which could be observed in the actual world.<sup>8</sup> For Plato, to discover the ideal was to go some way to understanding the ultimate source, which was ‘the Good’, a quality that

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<sup>3</sup> Haydon quoted in Pidgley *Benjamin Robert Haydon* 1986, pages not numbered.

<sup>4</sup> Cummings “Phidias in Bloomsbury” 1964, p. 328.

<sup>5</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> SC36 q. 240, p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Op cit., p. 21. See also Plato *The Republic* 1972, pp. 274-278 (Book VI).

worked in the same way as the Sun illuminating forms within the mind.<sup>9</sup> In Plato's understanding this ideal beauty could not be reproduced,<sup>10</sup> but Winckelmann and Sass followed other Classical theorists in considering that it was possible to make the ideal material, believing that Classical sculpture itself was its manifestation.<sup>11</sup> Similarly Benjamin Haydon considered that the Elgin Marbles contained an almost mystical ability to attune the eye to the qualities of the 'ideal', so much so that after having studied them any diversion from it in the construction of other forms would be immediately perceivable.<sup>12</sup>

An example of nineteenth-century sculpture inspired by the Parthenon frieze was the work of William Theed, whose name was given as an example of a superior designer by Charles Harriot Smith, himself an architectural modeller.<sup>13</sup>

According to Margaret Whinney (1964) Theed's pediment representing Hercules taming the Thracian Horses for Riding House, Buckingham Palace in c.1816 (see Figure 4.2) showed many qualities of the Marbles, as "[n]ot only are the horses directly inspired by the Parthenon sculpture, but the torso of Hercules is more fleshy and less dry in its articulation than would have been possible without a study of the pediment figures".<sup>14</sup> Theed captured the heroism of the mythical but enhanced its dynamism by combining it with the naturalism of anatomical detail.

Figure 4.2 Hercules taming the Thracian Horses for Riding House, Buckingham Palace, William Theed, c.1816.

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<sup>9</sup> Plato *The Republic* 1972, pp. 265-274 (Book VI).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 275 (Book VI).

<sup>11</sup> Op cit., p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> Cummings "Phidias in Bloomsbury" 1964, p. 323.

<sup>13</sup> SC35 q. 676, p. 46.

<sup>14</sup> Whinney *Sculpture in Britain* 1964, p. 210.



It is interesting to compare Theed's work with others who were given as examples of superior design on the Select Committee, and who represent varying degrees of the balance between naturalism and the ideal. For instance John Bacon, who was also suggested by Harriot Smith,<sup>15</sup> had been both a Royal Academician and worked for the artificial stone company Coade and Sealy as their chief designer.<sup>16</sup> Coade and Sealy's work was exhibited at the firm's own gallery on Westminster Bridge Road and in the accompanying catalogue it was noted that of the qualities to admire in the statues, "[t]he anatomical parts... are particularly worthy of observation".<sup>17</sup> If one considers the two images of Bacon's work (Figures 4.3 & 4.4 overleaf), then it is clear that the sculptor had a supreme ability to model the human form, but his work has a grandeur in its representation of the mythic that perhaps outweighs any individuation of the figures – thus the ideal tends to be accentuated in Bacon's sculpture. Figure 4.4 shows a 'River God' pattern for domestic sculptures from the Coade and Sealy catalogue of 1777-1778.<sup>18</sup> Figure 4.3 illustrates the use of this design to represent the Thames in a statue of George III that stands in the courtyard of Somerset House just outside the entrance of the Royal Academy (where later the Government School of Design was to be situated).

Again the idealised and mythic quality of these statues is also apparent in the design of his more ornamental domestic patterns such as figure 4.5, which shows the template for a fireplace from the same 1777-1778 Coade and Sealy catalogue. The figures are excellent and well-proportioned anatomically but they are by their nature decorative and do not capture the fleshiness (as Whinney describes it) or dynamism of Theed's heroic pediment.

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<sup>15</sup> SC35 q. 676, p. 46. In his evidence Mr. Edward Cowper also notes that Croggen and Co. provided good examples of design. Croggen and Co. were also part of the Coade and Sealy firm when William Croggen became Eleanor Coade's partner after John Sealy, later taking over as manager (Turner *The Dictionary of Art* 1992, p. 541, vol. 2).

<sup>16</sup> SC35 q. 676, p. 46. See also Clifford "John Bacon and the Manufacturers" 1985, p. 291.

<sup>17</sup> Coade & Sealy *Coade's Gallery* 1799, p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> There is an actual sculpture after this design surviving in Ham House in Surrey (Turner *The Dictionary of Art* 1998, p. 541, vol. 2).

Figure 4.3 George III and the River  
Thames, John Bacon 1780-86

Figure 4.4 River God from Coade and Sealy's  
1777-8 catalogue.

Figure 4.5 Fireplace design from Coade and Sealy catalogue, 1777-8.

Another sculptor's work worth comparing to these examples was suggested by the witness Sir John Dean Paul in 1836. Dean Paul was a banker and the proprietor of the Kensal Green Cemetery on the Harrow Road and as such was particularly concerned with examples of superior sculpture that would be appropriate for funerary monuments.<sup>19</sup> In his testimony he praised the work of Bertel Thorvaldsen, a sculptor who had travelled to Rome from Copenhagen in

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<sup>19</sup> Meller *London Cemeteries Gazetteer* 1981, p. 181.



1797 and stayed there until 1838, becoming one of the most famous sculptors in the city.<sup>20</sup> As can be seen from his figure of Jason from 1802-28 (Figure 4.6), Thorvaldsen chose a very severe Classical style that would have been recognised as being derived from the mid-fifth century BC, a period that Robert Rosenblum and H. W. Janson call "...the most heroic phase of Athenian art".<sup>21</sup> But interestingly, Thorvaldsen never studied the Elgin Marbles and in his portrayal of the pure Greek style, the calm correctness and contained beauty of the anatomical detail emphasises the ideal within the sculpture again perhaps less so than in Theed's work.<sup>22</sup>

Figure 4.6 Jason by Bertel Thorvaldsen (1802-28).

A further example can be considered in relation to Mr. John Jobson Smith's evidence. He was a partner of the Sheffield firm Stewart, Smith and Company, and he brought an example of his company's design for a stove front to the inquiry. Although we do not know what this looked like as it is not described or illustrated, he did note that the company itself was supported by the sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey who believed them to produce superior design.<sup>23</sup> A

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<sup>20</sup> Rosenblum & Janson *Art of the Nineteenth-Century* 1984, p. 108, p. 191.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>22</sup> *Op cit.*

<sup>23</sup> SC35 q. 104, p. 9. Chantrey who had become a member of the Royal Academy in 1816 had previously received no formal artistic training, working only as an apprentice to a woodcarver in Sheffield, and this early history may be where the connection with the Sheffield firm derived from (Rosenblum & Janson *Art in the Nineteenth Century* 1984, p. 193). Chantrey was also a member of the Government Normal School of Design Council and was closely involved with the selection of staff for the institution (British Museum MS Add 31218, f. 59; see also f. 4 and the note from Charles Poulet Thomson to Chantrey).

consideration of his sculpture does therefore give a sense of what was thought to be of such high quality in the work of the Sheffield firm and again confirms the importance of a combination of the naturalistic and the idealised in the human form, although deriving from a slightly different source.

Chantrey was from a relatively lowly background (he was the son of a tenant farmer), and this may have contributed to his particular style of work. Clearly, the sculptor had benefited from his apprenticeship with Robert Ramsey, whose business was said to have "...the best repository of works of art then or since in that town", i.e. Sheffield,<sup>24</sup> and this must have taught him enough of the Classical form (as well as his later study of Classical authors<sup>25</sup>) to enable him to recreate sculpture and relief that echoed these designs. However, his basic level of education may also have formed his interest in naturalism whereby he rejected the typical forms of allegory in art. Chantrey had commented:

I hate allegory, it is a clumsy way of telling a story. You may put a book on the lap of one female and call her History; a pair of compasses in the hand of another, and call her Science...But these are imaginary beings that we have nothing in common with, and dress them out as you will for the age, they can never touch the heart; all our feelings are with men like ourselves. To produce any real effect, we must copy man, we must represent his actions and display his emotions.<sup>26</sup>

This is apparent in the sculptor's work illustrated in figure 4.7 overleaf, which is an image of the monument to David Pike Watts (1817-1826) in Ilam Hall, Staffordshire that combines both the general feeling of the Classical alongside a sense of naturalism.<sup>27</sup> Rosenblum and Janson (1984) describe this as a merging of Classical styling in terms of composition, with the naturalism of observation apparent in the main figure's simple nightshirt and expression, which "...movingly conveys his awareness of a final parting".<sup>28</sup> As such Chantrey's work represents the other end of the scale where allegory was generally avoided

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selection of staff for the institution (British Museum MS Add 31218, f. 59; see also f. 4 and the note from Charles Poulet Thomson to Chantrey).

<sup>24</sup> Quoted in Whinney *Sculpture in Britain* 1964, p. 217.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>27</sup> Pevsner *Staffordshire* 1975, p. 153.

<sup>28</sup> Op cit., p. 193.



Figure 4.7 Monument to David Pike Watts (1817-1826) in Ilam Hall, Staffordshire, Francis Chantrey.

William Wyon a witness on the 1835 session of the Select Committee who was chief engraver at the Royal Mint also discussed this important relationship between the natural and the ideal. He had given a lecture at the Society of Arts “On Coins and Medals” in 1834 which was later published in the *Athenaeum* magazine.<sup>29</sup> The lecture consisted of a detailed account of the history of metal engraving, information that Wyon reiterated in his testimony to the Committee in 1835.<sup>30</sup> Of particular interest are his comments on the beauty of Greek coinage where he noted that the engravers, in producing images of living people, provide “...many splendid examples of the most elaborate finish in the detail and truth of resemblance to individual nature, without the breadth of effect being destroyed...”.<sup>31</sup> Figure 4.8 illustrates a Greek coin from c.380-345 BC showing the image of a warrior on horseback reminiscent of the Parthenon frieze. This object epitomises the essence that was seen in Greek art to capture both a sense

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<sup>29</sup> Carlisle *A Memoir of the Life and Work of William Wyon* 1837, p. 36.

<sup>30</sup> The account of Wyon’s lecture in Carlisle’s book coincides with examples of superior design given in his inquiry testimony (*Ibid.*, pp. 15-80; *SC35* qq. 1709-1736, pp. 129-131).

<sup>31</sup> Wyon quoted in Carlisle *A Memoir of the Life and Work of William Wyon* 1837, p. 69.

of life (as Whinney described it ‘flesh’) yet combine it with a mythic resonance, tying the energy of the individual to the eternal sphere of the ideal.

Figure 4.8 Coin from Taras (Southern Italy) c.380-345 BC.

Figure 4.9 Apollo coin from Catana-Aetna (Sicily) c. 410-403 BC.

Wyon’s comments regarding the merits of Greek coinage also lead to the other quality of superior design that was identified at the beginning of the chapter - this was the idea that a truly great designer was one who could imbue the work of art, particularly the human form with a sense of power and energy. On this subject Wyon commented

[i]n taking even a rapid survey of the Greek Coinage, we cannot sufficiently admire the Grandeur of Style displayed in the Heads of their *Deities*, many of which belong to the highest Class of Works of Art, - and, in comparing those Works with all modern efforts, it will be admitted that, while all the latter are frequently more correct in *Drawing*, they are inferior in *Energy* and *Power*.<sup>32</sup>

Figure 4.9 is an example of a Greek coin from c.410-403 BC with an image of Apollo that demonstrates the skill of the maker in recreating the dazzling presence of the god. It was this ability that Wyon referred to as an art that went beyond the basic skill of carving or engraving, and the sense that there was a quality that could be given to a work beyond simply its construction was a long-standing concept in the theory of art.

There were traditionally two parts of artistic creativity – the *ars* and the *ingenium*.<sup>33</sup> The term *ars* in sixteenth-century Italy inferred the skills or workmanship involved in

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<sup>32</sup> Carlisle *A Memoir of the Life and Work of William Wyon* 1837, p. 69.

<sup>33</sup> Baxandall *Giotto and the Orators* 1971, pp. 15-16.



painting, while the *ingenium* implied something that could not be learned through simple rules, a quality particular to the individual artist.<sup>34</sup> This elusive quality of *ingenium* was also identified by the first Select Committee witness Gustave Friedrich Waagen, who noted that the Renaissance painting masters passed onto their students a “mode of feeling”.<sup>35</sup> Waagen explained the power of the ‘mode of feeling’, noting that “[i]f it [a painting] possesses this ‘impress’ of the artist’s feeling, we overlook the possible defects in drawing and colour, as so many works of ancient artists prove”, and this personal vision, he opposed to that taught by “the cold general rule”.<sup>36</sup> The absence of the *ingenium* could sometimes be useful according to Mr. Edward Solly a picture collector. He noted that if a painting did not possess the particular ‘impress’ of the master, then it was possible to tell when a work of art was a fake because without the *ingenium*, painting was “...cold and crude”.<sup>37</sup> A similar view of the relationship between *ars* and *ingenium* was also put forward by John Landseer who believed (rather uniquely) that the Royal Academy in London did not pursue “...the trammelled ignorance of picture copying” or the *ars*, but encouraged “...more of that spontaneous and vigorous growth of original art, which the enterprise of taste and the energy of genius redeems from the depths of meditation, or snatches from nature...”.<sup>38</sup> Robert Butt of the firm Howell & James in Regent’s Street particularly identified the importance of the human form in expressing the quality of *ingenium* providing as an example of this the work of the sculptor John Flaxman. The same sculptor was similarly suggested as a superior designer by Charles Harriot Smith and Thomas Jones Howell (the factory inspector), while George Foggo (the artist) and Wyon specified a particular example of the sculptor’s work – the Shield of Achilles.<sup>39</sup>

The Shield was produced in four casts of silver-gilt and bronze<sup>40</sup> by the firm Rundell and Bridge,<sup>41</sup> a company also mentioned by Charles Robert Cockerell.<sup>42</sup> Figure 4.10

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> SC35 q. 95, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> SC35 q. 95, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup> SC36 q. 1856, p. 148.

<sup>38</sup> SC36 q. 2045, p. 170.

<sup>39</sup> SC35 q. 593, p. 41 (Robert Butt); SC35 q. 1753, p. 132 (William Wyon); SC35 q. 676, p. 46 (Charles Harriot Smith); SC36 q. 123, p. 14 (Thomas Jones Howell); George Foggo SC35 q. 691, p. 47.

<sup>40</sup> Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, p. 160.

<sup>41</sup> Rundell and Bridge were a well-known firm in the early nineteenth-century having been officially established in 1806, and continuing production until 1843. They were noted for using “...first rate Artists for designs in almost every description...” (Fox [*An Account of the firm Rundell, Bridge*, 1975 p. 1).

shows the object but of the witnesses' views on the sculpture we are given nothing very specific except that they believed it to be "...superior to any thing of the kind in existence".<sup>43</sup> This comment echoed a description of the sculpture from the text of John Gould, which was published the year before the evidence was given. On the subject of the Shield of Achilles Gould commented:

Nothing similar to it, ancient or modern, is, that we know of, in existence. Flaxman availed himself of the opportunity of condensing into one comprehensive space all the knowledge which he had acquired during a long and laborious life, from the study of the sculpture and literature of the Greeks. Among the most striking beauties of this arduous and splendid work, are the personification of the sun by the spirited alto-relievo of Apollo in his Chariot, in the centre of the shield, and the manner in which the various subjects of War, the Attack by the Lions on the Herd of Oxen, and the Marriage Festival are treated. Of the representation of war especially, in which Flaxman's anatomical knowledge is finely displayed, it may with perfect truth be said,

"That each bold figure seems to live or die".

Nor in the attack upon the herd can any thing be more admirable than the energetic ferocity of the monsters of the forest who have fastened on the bull, the desperate efforts of that noble animal to disengage himself, and the vain attempts of the herdsmen to urge their fierce but alarmed dogs to further resistance. To these scenes of contest and death, the beauty, elegance, and sprightliness of the nuptial procession, with all its classical accompaniments, form a delightful contrast.<sup>44</sup>

Figure 4.10 Shield of Achilles by John Flaxman (Rundell & Bridge), c. 1821.

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<sup>42</sup> Cockerell had also designed for the company SC35 q. 1463, p. 105.

<sup>43</sup> The evidence of William Wyon SC35 q. 1753, p. 132.

<sup>44</sup> Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, pp. 160-161.



It is clear from Gould's description that the figures in the Shield were key to providing the vehicle for expression, transmitting meaning to the viewer. He uses words such as 'spirited', 'energetic ferocity', 'desperate efforts', 'fierce', 'resistance' and 'sprightliness' all of which indicate the transmission of a feeling of energy within the sculpture. Like Wyon's identification of the 'energy' and 'power' in Greek coins, these terms indicate that Flaxman's skill was beyond the simple production of anatomically correct human forms, rather he was able to successfully capture the part of artistic production that was the *ingenium* or 'mode of feeling' that Waagen identified. But the energy in Flaxman's Shield was far more than the sculptor having imbued a sense of expression or *ingenium* into his work. For Gould Flaxman was able to produce the ultimate form of power through his sculpture – life itself. As the author noted

[o]f the representation of war especially, in which Flaxman's anatomical knowledge is finely displayed, it may with perfect truth be said,

"That each bold figure seems to live or die".<sup>45</sup>

This sense of the power of a sculptor to depict the life of the character that s/he had created takes the importance of close anatomical study a stage further. As the French sculptor Etienne-Maurice Falconet<sup>46</sup> suggested, the examination of the human form did not end at the application of its scientific rules but was intended to provide the artist with the raw materials in which to breath life into a work of art. He claimed that:

[i]n attempting the imitation of the surfaces of the human body, sculpture ought not to be satisfied with a cold likeness, such as man might be before the breath of life animated him. This sort of truth, although well rendered, can only excite by its exactitude a praise as cold as the likeness, and the soul of the spectator is not moved by it. It is living nature, animated, passionate, that the sculptor ought to express.<sup>47</sup>

Thus Falconet effectively aligned the activities of the sculptor to that of a god who was able to animate the figures that s/he created. This had been identified as the role of the artist in Leon Battista Alberti's book *On Painting* (1436). He claimed that

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<sup>45</sup> Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, p. 161. Rouse *The Story of Achilles* 1938, p. 369.

<sup>46</sup> Falconet (1716-1791) was a French sculptor, designer and writer (Turner *The Dictionary of Art* 1998, p. 763, Vol. 10).

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 233.

“...any master painter who sees his work adored will feel himself considered another god”.<sup>48</sup> This idea was also reiterated by the painter Federigo Zuccaro<sup>49</sup> in his understanding of *disegno*.

*Disegno* was a term used from the sixteenth-century to outline a series of skills that were deemed necessary for the education of the professional artist. These constituted an almost scientific programme of which a study of the human body was central.<sup>50</sup> Zuccaro made a pun of the word ‘disegno’ suggesting that the ability to design was “...the sign, ‘segno’ of god ‘di[o]’ in us”, a quality that could be applied when the artist undertook all manner of creations not simply sculpture or painting.<sup>51</sup>

Traditionally then, there was a belief that the ability to reproduce the human form provided more than mere scientific ability to undertake correct representation, rather it implied a sense that the artist’s status was that characterised by an empowered insight into the human condition making it possible for the truly gifted and studied artist to reproduce this essentially human essence. But the question was how to achieve this god-like ability in the representation of human form?

The question can begin to be answered if one considers where the skill of *ingenium* was thought to come from. The implication is that it emerged from the individual artist and that it was some inherent ability possessed by him or her. This infers that the artist was in some way different from others and I suggest that the artist-genius was believed to see things in a special way. Again if one considers traditional artistic theory, then the *ingenium* was thought to be evidenced through the artist’s particular style of painting, their manner or *maniera*.<sup>52</sup> Ann Bermingham (2000) has suggested that this style was communicated in drawing manuals that were constructed to teach the student-artist how to copy the master-artist’s style.<sup>53</sup> As well as teaching the student the basic skill of drawing therefore, these texts imbued learning with the

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<sup>48</sup> Alberti *On Painting* 1966, p. 64.

<sup>49</sup> Zuccaro (c.1540-1609) was an Italian painter, draughtsman and writer (Turner *The Dictionary of Art* 1998, p. 718, Vol. 33).

<sup>50</sup> Kemp & Wallace *Spectacular Bodies* 2000, p. 72; see also Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> These activities covered painting, sculpture, architecture, engineering and the applied arts (Ibid.).

<sup>52</sup> Giorgio Vasari describes *maniera* as emerging as a personal manner on psychological grounds (Alpers “Ekphrasis and Aesthetic Attitudes in Vasari’s *Lives* 1960, p.213).

<sup>53</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p. 4.



language of the individual artist's *ingenium*.<sup>54</sup> It was this crucial element that provided a tacit education in what was effectively the master's way of seeing the world as it was expressed through his or her specific style. In a sense the artist though viewing the world, received this information and expressed it through their individual perspective as was the Humanist tradition.<sup>55</sup> It is enlightening to consider how this ability to express or even possess *ingenium* was understood in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries because discovering the politics of authorship and invention will help to elucidate the situation from which a Benthamite model of design emerged.

## Invention, Originality and *Ingenium*

The difficulty with understanding how this process of individual invention worked or whether one could believe in the notion of originality, was expressed very clearly by a Charles O'Brien in his 1789 text *The Callico Printers' Assistant*. He commented that:

As for invention...it is not here offered to say what it is, much less how to describe it, there is a mutation of stile [sic.] or taste, to be sure, but nothing new; for novelty is only a name for an old effect or appearance revived with a little alteration, and (making a metaphysical excursion) if the question were asked, what is original? an answer could not be obtained sufficient to satisfy some enquirers, the term having no precise meaning, till it is agreed on all sides, how ideas are acquired, whether intuitively or by sensation, or in other words, whether productions termed original, are or are not but mere copies of certain archetypes, conveyed to the mind by its attendant faculties: and if the proudest designer in the printing or any other business, would be candid, he would confess there is not near so much of invention in what he produces, as he desires the world to give him credit for...<sup>56</sup>

The question of invention was discussed at length in the Select Committee because, as was noted in Chapter 2, the debates surrounding copyright demanded that some criteria be developed for judging what was original. An example of this discussion was the question put to Mr. John Jobson Smith, the iron manufacturer. He was asked:

Do not a great number of ornaments consist of a combination of old materials, and is it not likely that any other individual might combine those materials in a

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>55</sup> Kristeller *Renaissance Thoughts II* 1965, p. 11.

<sup>56</sup> O'Brien *The Callico Printers' Assistant* (1789), pages are not numbered, but this quote is on the equivalent of pp. 24-25.

manner so similar as to make it difficult to know whether he had the object of piracy in view, or whether the similarity was not casual?<sup>57</sup>

Jobson Smith believed that, though difficult, the registration of patterns would be possible because good design, in the form of a distinct pattern, would display "...so much of the particular mind and style of the artist, as to fairly constitute an original".<sup>58</sup> From this comment and in both O'Brien's description of invention and the frontispiece to his book, there is some hint as to a possible model of artistic *ingenium* in this period. Figure 4.11 shows O'Brien's table containing elements of patterns, each of which are numbered, and it gives an impression of what the author terms a "...mental respository" in which "...the fancy" has stored various ideas "...to be occasionally made use of".<sup>59</sup> However, he warned his readers:

...fancy should be restrained or governed by judgment, or its emanations will be eccentric or extravagant; and this faculty of judgment seems to be properly employed in going through its collection of ideas, to separate or arrange them as may be required...<sup>60</sup>

Figure 4.11 Frontispiece of Charles O'Brien's *The Callico Printer's Assistant* 1789.

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<sup>57</sup> SC35 q. 158, p. 13.

<sup>58</sup> SC35 q. 158, p. 13.

<sup>59</sup> O'Brien *The Callico Printer's Assistant* 1789, p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.



It would appear that in some way O'Brien's notion of 'judgment' and Jobson Smith's sense of the 'mind and style of the artist' are interconnected and the implications of this result in a sense that the good artist was one who absorbed the "...archetypes" available in the world and then combined and utilised them in a manner that was individual to their own genius.

Figure 4.12 Napoleon's nef<sup>61</sup> from the Coronation Service in silver-gilt, Henry Auguste (Percier & Fontaine), 1804.

Discovering the essential archetypes of style was therefore crucial if one was to begin to become a great artist, and Johann Winckelmann offered two methods of doing this, the first was the study of the antiquities of Greece, the other the study of nature and the human form.<sup>62</sup> Wyon also identified these two sources as being crucial for a successful artist's education and considered that the results of this learning were often visible in early nineteenth-century French designs such as figure 4.12. The witness described these objects as of "...a purer style derived from the study of nature and antique sculpture".<sup>63</sup> An education through the examination of the antiquities of the Classical world provided for Winckelmann, Haydon and Joshua Reynolds the equivalent of experiencing the Platonic 'ideal' in material form which Reynolds in

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<sup>61</sup> A 'nef' was a decorative ship-like ornament that contained the lord's cutlery and napkin (Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 272.

<sup>62</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 28.

<sup>63</sup> SC35 q. 1679, p. 127.

Figure 4.13 The *Apollo Belvedere*, original c. 320 B. C. Roman copy of Greek original.

Figure 4.14 Apollo Belvedere by Hendrik Goltzius, engraving from *Antique Statues in Rome* c. 1592 (with Renaissance additions completing the sculpture)

particular described as the “...common property” of every person.<sup>64</sup> This was also suggested by Henry Sass who thought that “...every town should have its museum”, within which should be kept “...a collection of those archetypes of art which have passed through the appropriation of ages – the Greek statues as a foundation of pure and elegant taste”.<sup>65</sup>

Sass explained that the best way of imbibing the lessons of the archetypal forms of Greek sculpture was to make a detailed observation of their surface.<sup>66</sup> Looking at the surface of a work was a traditional aspect of artistic education and it involved the careful examination of the qualities of art through observation that could then be translated into words; this was known as *ekphrasis*.<sup>67</sup> In his description of Greek sculptures, particularly the *Apollo Belvedere* (see Figure 4.13), Winckelmann described to his readers the intimate details of the sculpture

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<sup>64</sup> Reynolds quoted in Coltman “Sir William Hamilton’s Vase Publications” 2001, p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> SC36 q. 230, p. 23.

<sup>66</sup> SC36 q. 233, p. 23.

<sup>67</sup> Alpers “*Ekphrasis and Aesthetic Attitudes...*” 1960, p. 191.



as his eyes passed lovingly over its surface.<sup>68</sup> As such to read the description in Winckelmann's text was traditionally thought to be the equivalent of seeing the actual image. Importantly though, *ekphrasis* was traditionally never neutral but required a judgment from the viewer/speaker.<sup>69</sup> This is apparent in the work of the Dutch engraver Hendrick Goltzius who had portrayed the same experience of viewing the sculpture, but this time by using the physical action of the burin to reproduce the sensation of his eyes travelling over the contours of its surface.<sup>70</sup> Figure 4.14 is one of a series of images of Classical statues that were produced *nae t'leven* or 'after life', in other words created from the visual sensation of his seeing the statue itself.<sup>71</sup> The engraved lines particularly accentuated the contours of the musculature of the sculpture allowing the viewer of Goltzius' work to become party to his original observation and judgment, a feeling emphasised by the inclusion of a viewer depicted in the engraving, who is himself studying the work of art.<sup>72</sup>

As both Winckelmann and Goltzius's work show, there was a demand to transmit the experience of seeing the work of art and as such, books were considered to be ideal sources. A good example that was literally considered as a repository of archetypes was a 1779 book called *Iconography or A Collection of Emblematical Figures*, reprinted by the architect George Richardson from a sixteenth-century text. The book is indicative of how established the belief was that the 'ideal' and the Classical were synonymous.<sup>73</sup> *Iconography* was a lavish publication with many famous subscribers such as the Adam brothers, Thomas Chippendale, Joshua Reynolds and Matthew Bolton.<sup>74</sup> The book did not only take its information from early mythic treatises, but also drew on actual archaeological finds, such as antique coins and medals. As such, it was a repository of mythic and archaeological knowledge that its author directly related

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<sup>68</sup> Op cit., pp. 28-29.

<sup>69</sup> Baxandall *Giotto and the Orators* 1971, p. 87.

<sup>70</sup> The burin is the tool of an engraver, used to incise the surface of the plate (Lambert *Prints* 2001, p. 45). For details of Goltzius (Melion & Küchler "Introduction" in *Images of Memory* 1991, p. 10).

<sup>71</sup> Melion & Küchler "Introduction" in *Images of Memory* 1991, p. 19.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>73</sup> This was Cesare Ripa's *Iconographia* (1593).

<sup>74</sup> Keyser notes that the Lunar Society (which included Matthew Bolton) was associated with a "...strain of Neoplatonism" ("Ornament as Idea..." 1998, p. 128).

to Pythagoras and Plato, who were in turn understood to have derived their concepts from Egyptian hieroglyphics.<sup>75</sup> Richardson explained how the ideal images within the text had come about, and in so doing echoed the construction of the ideal as Sass had described it:<sup>76</sup>

Parrhasius<sup>77</sup> is said to have drawn, in this manner, the character of a whole people, and to have represented happily in one piece, that mixture of benevolence and cruelty, levity and obstinacy, bravery and effeminacy, that distinguished the Athenians. If such a complex representation was possible, it could only be effected [sic.] by the succours of *allegory*, by the means of emblems and figures that expressed *universal ideas*.<sup>78</sup>

Although this text contained a series of brightly coloured allegorical figures, there were other books that fulfilled the same purpose but presented collections of actual antiquities. Often the graphic vocabulary used for these texts was the line drawing or simple outline, which appeared to be understood to invoke the appropriate simplicity and essentialism for representing these archetypal forms. As such they were considered important as the first lesson for aspiring artists, a point strongly made by Robert Stothard during the Select Committee.<sup>79</sup> The relationship of this graphic style to Platonic forms is also suggested by the style of John Flaxman's work (see Figure 3.8 in previous chapter). He too favoured the simple outline and as was briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, the sculptor can be grouped with a number of 'primitives' attempting to invoke the essence of Classical style.<sup>80</sup> Flaxman was also closely connected to the Neoplatonic movement surrounding Thomas Taylor, who was the assistant secretary for the Society of Arts.<sup>81</sup> Taylor had translated much ancient literature into English including Plato and Pythagoras, and gave a series of twelve lectures on Platonic philosophy encouraged by Flaxman, who provided his own house as

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<sup>75</sup> Richardson *Iconology* 1779, pages not numbered but equivalent of page 1.

<sup>76</sup> Richardson also quotes Winckelmann on this point (*Ibid.*, pages not numbered but equivalent of page 3).

<sup>77</sup> Parrhasius/Parrhasios (late 5<sup>th</sup> BC – early 4<sup>th</sup> BC) Greek painter (Turner *The Dictionary of Art* 1998, p. 206, Vol. 24).

<sup>78</sup> *Op cit.*

<sup>79</sup> SC36 q. 283, p. 27.

<sup>80</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 299; Rosenblum *Transformations...* 1989, p. 159.

<sup>81</sup> Axon *Thomas Taylor* 1890, p. 9; Barbara Keyser (1998) described him as "...one of the most important members of the English Neoplatonist movement at the turn of the nineteenth-century" ("Ornament as Idea..." 1998, p. 128).



the venue.<sup>82</sup> It therefore seems that the simple outline was indeed the language adopted in this period to invoke the ideas of Plato.

Examples of the 'Platonic repository text' are William Hamilton's 1766-1776 *Collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman Antiquities from the Cabinet of the Honorable William Hamilton*.<sup>83</sup> This book was a series of luxuriously bound engravings of antique vases from his collection, volumes that were reprinted many times into the early nineteenth century (Figure 4.15).<sup>84</sup>

Figure 4.15 Illustration from William Hamilton's *Collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman Antiquities*, 1766-1776.

The book became a pattern book for the Wedgwood firm in particular and the illustrations provided an ideal source for this by containing indication of the pieces' dimensions and different views of the same object.<sup>85</sup> Thomas Hope's *Household Furniture and Decoration* of 1807 could also be considered in the same light. This text contained even simpler outline drawings of the contents of his newly designed house on Duchess Street.

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<sup>82</sup> Axon *Thomas Taylor* 1890, p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> Coltman "Sir William Hamilton's Vase Publications" 2001, pp. 10.

<sup>84</sup> Rosenblum *Transformations...* 1989, p. 164, n. 57.

<sup>85</sup> Coltman "Sir William Hamilton's Vase Publications" 2001, pp. 10.

Figure 4.16 The First Vase Room in Thomas Hope's Duchess Street Mansion, image from *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration, Executed from Designs by Thomas Hope* 1807.

Figure 4.16 shows an image of Hope's collection of vases, which along with other drawings of furnishings and clothing, suggest that the collection literally provided a series of archetypal forms that could be copied for the decoration of other homes. Another striking example can be found in the end pages of an unexpected source, *The Smith and Founder's Director* by L. N. Cottingham (1824). As reasoning for the inclusion of these images, the author noted that the book had been extremely popular and in the reprinting he considered it appropriate to also show images of his collection of antique vases (see figure 4.17). Like the other metalwork designs, these were intended to guide the "...aspiring tradesman"... into "...forming correct and tasteful compositions".<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Cottingham *The Smith and Founders' Director* 1824, preface.



Figure 4.17 Plate XXXII Outlines of Antique Vases, Cottingham *The Smith and Founder's Director* by L. N. Cottingham from 1824.

Yet once a student had successfully imbibed these works of art or simply the fundamental forms, there was still the question of his or her 'mind and style' that Jobson Smith referred to. This quality did not seem to come from simply copying designs in books. In his text on Vitruvius, William Wilkins noted that the creation of new designs based on the art of antiquity should not be 'servile' copies but should indicate that an artist had mastered the principles inherent in Greek artistic production.<sup>87</sup> Other witnesses were also keen to suggest that in the field of design for manufactures "...servile copying of the works of others [is] very injurious to the ornamental designers, as it regards originality of conception", and similar statements were used throughout the proceedings.<sup>88</sup> But perhaps the most overt comment was made by Charles Robert Cockerell who warned that pattern books of this type encouraged an aspiring designer "...to dabble" and put odd fragments of decoration together". This resulted in an absence of the "...true principles of design... the deficiency of the master

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<sup>87</sup> Williams quoted in Hamilton *Letter from W. R. Hamilton to the Earl of Elgin* 1836, p. 9, n. \*.

<sup>88</sup> Evidence of David Ramsey Hay (Edinburgh house decorator) SC36 q. 431, p. 39. See also the evidence of John Millward, a lace manufacturer, SC36 q. 161, p. 17. See also the evidence of Thomas Field Gibson SC35 q. 365, p. 27 & q. 380, p. 28; also Samuel Smith SC35 q. 317, p. 24.

hand”.<sup>89</sup> Thus it seemed that though these books echoed the form of the sixteenth-century texts they had not resolved one of the main problems, which was the additional sense of originality that Bermingham described, i.e. they did not contain the crucial viewpoint of the master artist that had been simultaneously imbibed by the aspiring Renaissance artist in order to guide them towards developing their own *ingenium*. Clearly these ‘repository’ books could not substitute what appeared to be the very personal experience of understanding the archetype in the first instance. Indeed this sense of one’s personal effort to study was emphasised by Alberti who considered that the artist could only invent by making his own observations.<sup>90</sup>

This is apparent if we return to Gould’s description of Flaxman’s Shield of Achilles, he described its production as an “...arduous and splendid work”, explaining that the piece was a result of Flaxman’s “...condensing into one comprehensive space all the knowledge which he had acquired during a long and laborious life, from the study of the sculpture and literature of the Greeks”.<sup>91</sup>

John Flaxman had visited Italy in 1787 and stayed there for seven years.<sup>92</sup>

Rosenblum and Janson describe this period:

He admired Michelangelo, but he also made drawings after Baroque sculpture, which he despised. The return to antiquity, for Flaxman, meant recapturing the simplicity of “olden times”, whether Greek or medieval – the earlier, the more “primitive”, the better.<sup>93</sup>

Thus the expression that Flaxman captured and transmitted, was understood to be produced from a rigorous study of many periods of artistic production, dominated and ultimately guided by Classical principles. This was a quality that Joshua Reynolds had articulated as being essential to the training of an artist if s/he was to be successful.<sup>94</sup> Distillation of an artist’s entire learning was ‘laborious’ and ‘arduous’ because a good artist was not simply copying the styles of the past, but was drawing out the fundamental principles that lay beneath them

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<sup>89</sup> SC35 q. 1440, p. 102.

<sup>90</sup> Spencer “Ut Rhetorica Pictura” 1957, p. 36.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 159.

<sup>93</sup> Rosenblum & Janson *Art of the Nineteenth Century* 1984, pp. 93-4.

<sup>94</sup> Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, p. xiv.



all. Thus seemingly beyond the superficial form of the Classical lay another more profound archetype, the equivalent of the *istoria* in antiquity. For many artists this deeper reality was geometry, because it appeared to fulfil the requirements of the ideal that Winckelmann and Reynolds had established. They had considered that the ideal like geometry derived purely from the mind<sup>95</sup> and as such geometry appeared to be extremely appropriate for the articulation of the immaterial and abstract.<sup>96</sup> Thus an investigation into geometry may indeed help in attempting to understand how the mechanism of the artist's individual *ingenium* was thought to work.

## Geometry in Science and Art

Figure 4.18 Plate 2, Vol. 1 from Thomas Sheraton's *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Assistant* 1793.

Thomas Sheraton's *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* (1793) began its lessons by outlining a series of geometrical shapes (Figure 4.18). It is these that for Sheraton provided the basis to the subsequent learning presented in his text. This was followed by other illustrations in which the author suggested that these basic shapes formed the basis to essential forms of Greek art, particularly the five orders of columns (Figure 4.19).<sup>97</sup> As was noted in Chapter

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<sup>95</sup> Jenkins *Archaeologists and Aesthetes* 1992, p. 22.

<sup>96</sup> Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, p. 25.

<sup>97</sup> Sheraton *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book* 1793, pp. 120-181.

3, the painter Richard Ramsey Reinagle offered similar evidence to the Select Committee that also highlighted the basis of geometry in Greek art.<sup>98</sup>

Figure 4.19 Plate 12, Vol. 1 from Thomas Sheraton's *The Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Assistant* 1793.

With the aid of a diagram (a section of which was illustrated in the previous chapter Figure 3.13), he explained the underlying principles behind Greek forms by revealing their evolution from single lines:

The first position of simple lines may be either perpendicular, as in the upper part of this diagram (No. 4), or they may be converted into horizontal lines by a change of position. They present nothing in this form that enables the mind to generate any thing, excepting that it might possibly be a gridiron, or represent columns; and when horizontal, steps. But when they are gathered into a central point (No. 5), and radiate,

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<sup>98</sup> SC36 qq. 603-605, pp. 51-53.



Figure 4.20 No. 11 on R. R. Reinagle's geometrical diagrams included in the Select Committee Proceedings of 1835-6.

Figure 4.21 Theseus from East Pediment showing similar shape to Reinagle's geometrical form in drapery underneath the figure.

they represent a great many objects, such as rays of the sun, also perspective inclinations of converging lines; they represent also those degrees and proportions of divisions of radiating lines which the Greeks have so ably laid down as one of the rudiments on which taste is to be founded by tangible forms...<sup>99</sup>

But geometry was also of profound importance to scientific and manufacturing endeavour, indeed it was geometry that provided for James Nasmyth a way to bridge the cultural gap between the sphere of Greek works of art and the understanding of mechanics. In his testimony he suggested that because mechanics possessed a "...common-sense mathematics" learned through their work, then they would be able to understand the geometrical basis of Classical objects.<sup>100</sup> He suggested that the display of such objects would therefore be highly effective to encourage the taste and knowledge of the ideal.<sup>101</sup> However just as the workers possessed an inherent understanding of mathematics, so it was acknowledged by Nasmyth that all architecture and machinery was derived from the same language of geometry as Greek art, and if based on this would prove as beautiful as antiquity. Geometrical design was also economically viable.

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<sup>99</sup> SC36 q. 605, p. 51.

<sup>100</sup> SC36 q. 303, p. 28.

<sup>101</sup> SC36 q. 315, p. 30.

In the majority of instance, the most economical disposition of materials coincides with such a form as presents the most elegant appearance to the eye; this is especially the case where the elliptic or parabolic curves are employed in the form of the parts which connect one part of the machine with the other, so that when viewed as one design it shall present a perfectly graceful form, and at the same time completely attain the object in view.<sup>102</sup>

Figure 4.22 Plate in appendix from A. W. N. Pugin's *Contrasts* 1836.

In the same way that the machine was a model of economy and beauty for Nasmyth, so the factory in which it was housed also took on this same scientifically based logic. This was described by A. W. N. Pugin when he established the relationship between a love of the Classical and a simpler more geometrically based architecture particularly in the building of factories where efficiency and purposeful simplicity were embraced (see Figure 4.22).<sup>103</sup> Thus, at the basis of manufacture lay a geometrical skeleton virtually dictating the appearance of the building, yet most factories also alluded to the Classical style from which this geometry was derived.<sup>104</sup> Figure 4.23 overleaf shows an example of a building in Stockport from 1832 where the austere mill is overshadowed by an apparently Classical column on a pedestal that doubles as a chimney.<sup>105</sup> The

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<sup>102</sup> SC36 q. 294, p. 28.

<sup>103</sup> Pugin *Contrasts* 1969, pages not numbered.

<sup>104</sup> Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 267.

<sup>105</sup> Nasmyth comments that "...forms are now introducing with respect to steam-engine chimnies....which, when contrasted with the forms previously employed for the same purpose, clearly exhibit the growing improvement in public taste with regard to these subjects... There seems to be a want of some system by which these modes of design can be properly systemized and impressed on the minds of the proprietors as well as the mechanics..." (SC36 q. 323, p. 31).



image was included in Andrew Ure's *Philosophy of Manufactures* from 1835, which enthusiastically embraced the scientific efficiency of the factory system. In his text the factory as a whole was conceived of as a "complex automaton" in which the smaller parts (the machines themselves) were orchestrated.<sup>106</sup> As Ure explained, the factory system should be thought of as "...some complex mechanisms... [that are] most readily comprehended by inspection of a plan, in which the mutual bearings and connexions of the parts are analytically shown".<sup>107</sup> In this statement Ure emphasised the plan of the factory encouraging the reader to acknowledge the geometrical and therefore scientific principles on which it was based.

Figure 4.23 Orrell's Stockport Mill (1832) illustration in A. Ure's *The Philosophy of Manufactures* 1835.

*The Philosophy of Manufactures* offers us the factory system as the model by which other requirements of life took their template - the author identifying three 'organic spheres' which interacted around factory life, which were the mechanical, moral and commercial.<sup>108</sup> In a similar way much Benthamite Radicalism tended to embrace the sense that business and industry were 'real' while other aspects of life were merely an extension of that sphere.<sup>109</sup> In turn this echoed Francis Bacon's own utopian story of a community centred on the scientific study of the 'College of the Six Dayes Workes' or 'Salomon's House'

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<sup>106</sup> Ure *The Philosophy of Manufactures* 1967, p. 15.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>109</sup> Egbert *Social Radicalism and the Arts* 1970, p. 384.

in the *New Atlantis*.<sup>110</sup> It is therefore not surprising that in model societies such as Robert Owen's New Lanark experiment the plans were based around production and labour incorporating other needs such as health care, education and entertainment around this main focus.<sup>111</sup> As such Owen adopted the geometrical basis of the factory for entire structures of these villages such as his design for Lanark of 1821 (Figure 4.24). Figure 4.25 shows a later image of another of his utopian villages (modelled in part on Bacon's *New Atlantis*) published in 1832 and 1833 in Owen's magazine *The Crisis*.<sup>112</sup> Again it exhibits a strong sense of plan and symmetry.<sup>113</sup>

Figure 4.24 Map of Owen's proposed villages for the County of Lanark (1821)

Figure 4.25 Steadman Whitwell 'Bird's-eye view of one of the communities of Harmony in the State of Indiana...' c. 1825. Reprinted in Owen's magazine *The Crisis* 1832-1833.

<sup>110</sup> Bacon "New Atlantis" in *Sylva Sylvarum* 1639, pp. 8-9.

<sup>111</sup> This was ironic given Owen's opposition to the creation of people as "...mere animal machines" (Owen quoted in Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 290).

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 292 & Owen *The Crisis* 1833, front page.

<sup>113</sup> See also in Profiles James Silk Buckingham's 1848 'Victoria', model of an idealised city.



The appearance of these plans is not simply a result of their authors adopting the geometry of Greek art or mechanics. Rather they embraced geometrical principles because traditionally philosophers, like artists had conceived geometry to be the fundamental principle of nature and the universe as a whole. For centuries the hope of discovering the underlying truth about the construction of the physical world had centred on the growing sophistication of mathematical investigation and the reproduction of geometrical formulae. For example, Galileo considered the language of the universe to be "...mathematical... [in which] the characters are triangles, circles and other geometrical figures".<sup>114</sup> In his book on harmonious colouring David Ramsey Hay similarly identified this underlying principle in nature, claiming that "[s]he [Nature] will be... instructor".<sup>115</sup> Thomas Donaldson in his testimony to the Select Committee explained that geometry was fundamental as "...the foundation of scientific knowledge".<sup>116</sup> Thus to select the correct geometrical formula for one's vision of a factory or a model society (or both) was in some way to attune one's plan with the greater truth of the universe itself, a concept that echoed the micro-macrocosm of the Renaissance.<sup>117</sup> This relationship was strengthened by the continued belief that at the core of these geometrical structures lay the human body as the measure of all things. On this subject Donaldson noted that geometrical form was conceived of "...in nature too; for the greatest writers upon art have reduced form, even that of the human figure, to geometrical proportions".<sup>118</sup> We shall see that as geometry was understood to reveal the structure of the human body, so the human body was simultaneously thought to reveal the geometrical and therefore scientific basis of the universe, even into the early nineteenth-century.

## The Micro-Macrocosm

The theory of the micro-macrocosm was inherited from the Renaissance scheme of *disegno*, in which an essential element was the belief that the human body formed a microcosm of the larger universe, i.e. the macrocosm. This theory had

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<sup>114</sup> Galileo quoted in Brett "Drawing and the Ideology of Industrialization" in *Design History: An Anthology* 1995, p. 11.

<sup>115</sup> Hay *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring* 1836, pp. 63-64.

<sup>116</sup> SC36 q. 336, p. 32.

<sup>117</sup> Eaton *Ideal Cities* 2001, pp. 16-17.

<sup>118</sup> SC36 q. 337, p. 32.

derived from the words of the ancient philosopher Protagoras who explained that “...man is the mean and measure of all things”.<sup>119</sup> As such the human form in its ideal state provided the visible yardstick by which to understand and reproduce the invisible ‘divine order’ of the universe.<sup>120</sup> This micro- macrocosm was often represented by Renaissance thinkers as the image of a body within a square and a circle, and figure 4.26 shows a famous example of the scheme created by Leonardo Da Vinci.<sup>121</sup>

Figure 4.26 Leonardo Da Vinci’s Vitruvian figure showing micro-macrocosm.

This image had been used to illustrate many later editions of the Roman author Vitruvius’ ten volume book *De architectura* (first century AD),<sup>122</sup> in which the sum of Greek and Roman building knowledge was written.<sup>123</sup> The da Vinci image of a man with arms and legs outstretched within a square and a circle was an illustration for a Renaissance edition of Vitruvius’ third book on the building of temples.<sup>124</sup> In this the Roman author had described how the human body formed a template for the design of a temple building, linking man to God.<sup>125</sup> *De architectura* was the only treatise of its kind to survive into the modern era and

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<sup>119</sup> Op cit., p. 47.

<sup>120</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, pp. 39-40.

<sup>121</sup> Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, pp. 22-23.

<sup>122</sup> Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, p. 23.

<sup>123</sup> Summerson *The Classical Language of Architecture* 1985, p. 10.

<sup>124</sup> Op cit.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.



was therefore extremely influential.<sup>126</sup> In this way the idea of the micro-macrocosm was absorbed by later readers.<sup>127</sup> Vitruvius' theories were embraced by Alberti who was also an architect and wrote an architectural treatise *De re aedificatoria* in 1485.<sup>128</sup> Both of these texts drew on "...the cosmological geometry established by Plato with the 'divine' harmony of the golden section".<sup>129</sup>

Vitruvius' words on the importance of geometry as the basis of all architecture were first partly translated in Britain by the Elizabethan mathematician John Dee in the preface to his translation of Euclid.<sup>130</sup> The larger scheme of *disegno* was then introduced into Britain in the eighteenth-century particularly through translations of Charles du Fresnoy's book *The Art of Painting*,<sup>131</sup> and many excerpts from this text found their way into other writings aimed specifically at the applied arts, such as *Bowles's Complete Drawing Book* from the 1790s.<sup>132</sup> Bowles's text and others from that period stressed the importance of studying the human form when learning to draw, and in the same way that Vitruvius linked man and the great Creator through the geometry of the body, this book claimed that the mastery of representing the human form would lead to an ability to create all other objects.<sup>133</sup> The Vitruvian micro-macrocosm was thus implicitly absorbed and it is also probable that later Neoplatonic Renaissance authors who embraced the theories of Vitruvius and Alberti were also imbibed into the thinking of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries. Though they may not have been explicit references, the influence of these general theories proves enlightening in the quest to find the mechanisms by which the *ingenium* was thought to occur, particularly in the ability to breath life into the human form.

The possibilities of this widespread interest in Neoplatonism is noted by Barbara Whitney Keyser (1998) who explains that there was a close connection between

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<sup>126</sup> Summerson op cit.

<sup>127</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p. 39.

<sup>128</sup> Eaton *Ideal Cities* 2001, pp. 48-49.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Yates op cit., p. 33; see also Brett "Drawing and the Ideology of Industrialization" in *Design History: An Anthology* 1995, p. 11.

<sup>131</sup> Last published in 1811 (Puetz "Design Instruction for Artisans..." 1999, p. 239.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

British industrial technology, art manufactures and a Neoplatonic “mathematical mysticism”. The Platonism inherent in some pattern books has already been discussed and Keyser believes that this nineteenth-century Neoplatonism was based on the confluence of two revolutions – the industrial and the romantic.<sup>134</sup> It is this legacy that artists such as John Flaxman and scholars like Thomas Taylor inherited. Indeed perhaps they were not the only Neoplatonic enthusiasts. Isaac Disraeli had described the British situation in this period thus:

At the close of the eighteenth-century, be it recorded, were published many volumes in which the author affects to avow himself a zealous Platonist, and asserts that he can prove that the Christian religion is ‘a bastardised and barbarous Platonism’. The divinities of Plato are the deities to be adored, and we are to be taught to call God, Jupiter; the Virgin, Venus; and Christ, Cupid! The Iliad of Homer allegorised, is converted into a Greek Bible of the Arcana of Nature!<sup>135</sup>

This description suggests that a fascination with Platonism was not limited to an isolated group and it is interesting to note that a novelist like Edward Lytton-Bulwer (a member of the 1835 session of the Committee) was encouraged to do further research into occult Neoplatonism after writing his book *The Last Days of Pompeii* which he published in 1834.<sup>136</sup> It could therefore have been possible that Neoplatonism was still ‘in the air’ even in the 1830s or that a resurgence of interest may have surrounded Taylor’s death which was in 1835.<sup>137</sup>

Figure 4.27 Vitruvian Theatre Plan by Palladio.

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<sup>134</sup> Keyser “Ornament as Idea” 1998, p. 128.

<sup>135</sup> Disraeli quoted by Axon *Thomas Taylor, the Platonist* 1890, p. 1.

<sup>136</sup> Roberts *Gothic Immortals* 1990, pp. 160-161.

<sup>137</sup> Axon *Thomas Taylor, the Platonist* 1890, p. 14.



Figure 4.28 Frances Yates's plan of Giulio Camillo's Memory Theatre, included in *The Art of Memory* 1992.

What may perhaps have been of interest for the artists and scholars of the early nineteenth-century is that the Renaissance Neoplatonists had experimented and combined different parts of ancient thinking, so inferring that disparate ideas formed a greater body of universal knowledge. One of the most pertinent of these as regards the role of the figurative artist or sculptor was the Neoplatonist Giulio Camillo. Around 1532, Camillo had constructed a wooden amphitheatre based on a Vitruvian model, large enough for two people to walk inside. Figures 4.27 and 4.28 show a Vitruvian theatre plan and the model by Frances Yates (1992) of the levels in Camillo's theatre respectively. The first image illustrates how though the theatre had only a semi-circular stage it was conceived of as a circle; this was therefore the legacy in Camillo's building.

As a visitor to Camillo's theatre one would have found oneself on a stage, looking out into what would normally have been the spectators' seats. But instead of the audience, the seven tiers that rose around the viewer on the stage, contained symbols (behind which were boxes full of papers) that encapsulated forms that the Neoplatonist understood to exist as ideals in the mind. Thus, Camillo's theatre was purported to provide the spectator with a knowledge of all that existed in the metaphysical realm.<sup>138</sup> For the viewer this understanding was to give them an insight beyond that of a mortal one making the "...mind and memory of man...now 'divine', having the powers of grasping the highest

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<sup>138</sup> For a complete description see Yates *The Art of Memory* 1992, pp. 135-162.

reality”.<sup>139</sup> For Yates the divine transformation in the mind of a visitor to Camillo’s theatre was possible because the Neoplatonist had combined the model of a Vitruvian theatre with the theories of the *Asclepius*, which was a text known since the Middle Ages attributed to the author Hermes Trismegistus and believed to have come from the Egyptians.<sup>140</sup> This was the same source of archetypes that George Richardson referred to in his preface to *Iconography* in 1779.<sup>141</sup>

Vitruvius had also based his model of a theatre on the cosmic geometry of the spheres and stars ultimately reflected in the proportions of an ideal human body.<sup>142</sup> Yates believes that the mechanisms by the sacred proportions of Camillo’s theatre were invoked, in order to ‘awaken’ the Platonic forms visible in the tiers of the theatre, was through the ‘god making’ passage from the *Asclepius*.<sup>143</sup> This was a piece of writing that Camillo himself used to describe the method inherent in his theatre. This ‘god making’ was a process whereby the Egyptians were thought to have been able to imbue their statues with life by drawing on the energy of the spheres, through an incantation encapsulating the proportions of ‘universal harmony’.<sup>144</sup> Camillo explained that

[s]imilar to such statues, I find a composition of words, the office of which is to hold all the words in a proportion grateful to the ear...Which words as soon as they are put into their proportion are found when pronounced to be as it were animated by harmony.<sup>145</sup>

If one were to summarise the mechanism of this structure then, it would be that the viewers standing on the stage of a theatre based on the proportions inherent in all things including the human body, invoked the knowledge contained within the structure through the use of their own bodies to literally *embody* the divine harmony. In this way the viewers were at once empowered to see the truth of the world and were simultaneously able to know and use that truth, becoming ‘divine’ themselves.

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>140</sup> Yates *The Art of Memory* 1966, p. 145.

<sup>141</sup> Richardson *Iconology* 1779, pages not numbered but equivalent of page 1.

<sup>142</sup> Yates *Theatre of the World* 1987, p. 50-51; Eaton *Ideal Cities* 2001, p. 49.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>144</sup> Op cit., p. 156.

<sup>145</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*



This was also traditionally the same role as the painter. As was noted previously in Alberti's *De pictura* the figure of the painter was considered to be like a god, and it was by quoting the *Asclepius* that Alberti supported this statement. He claimed that from the authority of Trismegistus, we have gained the understanding that painting and sculpture were born at the same time as religion and thus "...mankind portrays the gods in his own image from his memories of nature and his own origins".<sup>146</sup> For Alberti in their ability to create images, painters (more so than sculptors) possessed divine insight into the creation of humanity, equal if not more divine than the deity itself. This idea therefore provides a precedent for the words of Falconet as well as with Zuccaro's pun on *disegno*, the sign of god in us.<sup>147</sup> At once an artist was therefore able to see the divine proportions that enabled him (or her) to use them and imbue the essence of life into their work. The question is when an artist such as John Flaxman reproduced the ideal proportions of the human form therefore, was he invoking the power of proportion from the same 'god making' process as was contained in the *Asclepius*, invoking sacred geometry so "[t]hat each bold figure seems to live or die"?<sup>148</sup>

## Dissection

Though the mechanics of Camillo's theatre and the theories of the *Asclepius* may not have been overtly known in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century,<sup>149</sup> the structure of the Vitruvian theatre was very much in evidence during the period. The form of Camillo's theatre with the body of the visitor on the stage existed in the dissection theatres of London. If the Neoplatonic notion of the human form was indeed still active within the early nineteenth-century then it was within these theatres that the ceremony of Neoplatonism was re-enacted. Five anatomical institutions are listed in Pigot and Co's 1831 *Perambulator* and there were other venues available in London for the activity

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<sup>146</sup> Alberti *On Painting* 1966, p. 65.

<sup>147</sup> Kemp and Wallace *Spectacular Bodies* 2000, p. 72.

<sup>148</sup> Gould *Biographical Sketches* 1834, pp. 160-161.

<sup>149</sup> I have no evidence one way or the other.

such as the London Mechanics' Institute (see Figure 4.29) as well as the London University.<sup>150</sup>

Figure 4.29 Lecture Theatre in London Mechanics' Institute 1824-1825.

In addition to the availability of these venues, dissection was certainly of profound importance to the artists of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century in Britain. Around 1800 the convergence of the art of dissection and the process of 'god making' was undertaken very literally by the artist Thomas Banks, a designer recommended by George Foggo.<sup>151</sup> Figure 4.30 is the *écorché* in the posture of the crucified Christ that he created with the help of the anatomist Joseph Constantine Carpue and the artists Benjamin West and Richard Cosway. Together they flayed the body of a newly executed murderer James Legg and his corpse was crucified by the anatomist so as to study the true effects of crucifixion on the human form.<sup>152</sup> In this way the artists aimed to challenge the traditional depiction of the crucified Christ figure in opposition to the

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<sup>150</sup> These anatomy theatres were in Hatton Gardens, Great Maze pond, Webb Street, Blenheim Street and Great Windmill Street (Pigot & Co *The Perambulator* 1831, p. 256. These locations are identified along with other scientific institutions in black on the map Appendix 3.

<sup>151</sup> SC35 q. 726, p. 50.

<sup>152</sup> Kemp and Wallace *Spectacular Bodies* 2000, pp. 85-86; Bryant "Thomas Banks's Anatomical crucifixion" 1991, pp. 409-411.



Renaissance painters, which Julius Bryant (1991) notes the Academy was ambitious to transcend.<sup>153</sup>

Figure 4.30 Thomas Banks *Écorché as Crucified Christ* c.1800.

Renaissance painters had themselves undertaken the dissection of bodies for the sake of their art and the role of the dissection of the body is at the centre of a series of complex analogies relating to geometry and the *istoria*. The dissected view of the body had been recommended by Alberti who suggested that a painter should “[f]irst...sketch in the bones, for, as they bend very little indeed, they always occupy a determined position. Then add the sinews and muscles, and finally clothe the bones and the muscles with the flesh and the skin”.<sup>154</sup> But again the power of the art of representing the body through an indepth anatomical understanding was not simply in order to get the depiction of a body ‘right’. Rather Alberti considered that the systematic creation of the body on the canvas could reveal the *istoria*. As has been noted in Chapter 3, the *istoria* roughly equated to the cause of the appearance of a painting, it was the logic or reasoning behind the event that was represented. In the same way that all parts of a painting had to work together to create the unfolding of the narrative, so the depiction of

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<sup>153</sup> Bryant “Thomas Banks’s Anatomical Crucifixion” 1991, p. 410.

<sup>154</sup> Alberti *On Painting* 1966, p. 73.

the body's appearance also required an understanding of the cause of that appearance, based on a knowledge of anatomy.<sup>155</sup> To reiterate this Alberti used the human body as a metaphor to describe how the painting as a whole should be constructed through the different layers of the bones, muscles, flesh and skin.<sup>156</sup> Figure 4.31 is a sketch by Leonardo da Vinci showing the build up of layers in a painting based around the 'bones' of the perspectival lines. In this way there was an analogical relationship between the skeleton and the geometrical basis of perspectival painting.

Figure 4.31 Perspectival study for the background of Leonardo da Vinci's *Adoration of the Magi*, c.1481.

Da Vinci recognised the importance of understanding the underlying structure in the production of superior art and he is perhaps one of the most well known of Renaissance artists to dissect the human body himself. Following Alberti, Leonardo also considered that "...if a painter was to characterize the outer manifestations of what he called *il concetto dell'anima* (the intentions of the mind) in a great narrative painting... it was necessary to understand at the deepest level the inner causes of outer effects".<sup>157</sup> For this Leonardo concentrated on the dissection of the human brain, in an attempt to understand the centres of the brain in the creation of outer expression.<sup>158</sup> Following this tradition Francis Chantrey also considered that "[t]o produce any real effect, we must copy man,

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<sup>155</sup> Alberti uses the metaphor of the different levels of the human body, e.g. bones, muscles, flesh etc. to describe the construction of a painting (Alberti *On Painting* 1966, p. 45).

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p.45.

<sup>157</sup> Kemp & Wallace *Spectacular Bodies* 2000, p. 70.

<sup>158</sup> Mathé *Leonardo Da Vinci: Anatomical Drawings* 1978, p. 33.



we must represent his actions and display his emotions”.<sup>159</sup> Anatomy was therefore an art for revealing the hidden structures of the body, an invisible knowledge that lay beneath the usually perceptible surface. But an insight into the individual mind, its intentions and the causes of expression not only allowed one to breathe life into the individual but also to understand the whole scene and represent the *istoria* of the whole scene. This was because Alberti’s concept of the relationship between the geometry in a painting and the human body was not simply analogical. Rather he considered that the very structure of geometry was based on the proportions of the human form, in which “...one-third of the height of a man – one *braccio* – is taken as the module”.<sup>160</sup> Thus to dissect, was not simply to understand the make up of the human body, but in effect to master the mysteries of the scene as a whole – to create the ‘unity of design’ so essential to good art. This broader view, like the role of the theories of *Asclepius* in Camillo’s theatre simultaneously imbued the figure being depicted with life, like the Platonic forms in Camillo’s structure, whilst bestowing on the viewer/painter a ‘divine mind’. Figure 4.32 overleaf shows a page from Flaxman’s detailed anatomical drawings, perhaps it was indeed this process that the sculptor employed to create the figures on Achilles’ Shield.

Figure 4.32 Anatomical studies by John Flaxman published in *Anatomical Studies of the Bones and Muscles for the Use of Artists*, William Robertson 1833.

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<sup>159</sup> Chantrey quoted in Whinney *Sculpture in Britain* 1964, p. 227.

<sup>160</sup> Spencer “Introduction” in *On Painting* 1966, pp. 22-23.

Given the powerful associations with dissection, it is therefore no surprise that anatomical studies were particularly associated with members of the Royal Academy, an organisation that from its founding was keen to define its authority by excluding all but the “leading painters, sculptors and architects from its membership”,<sup>161</sup> an aspect of the institution investigated at length during the Committee Proceedings.<sup>162</sup> From the establishment’s founding, the Academy had appointed its own professor of anatomy, the first being William Hunter.<sup>163</sup> Hunter believed that it was essential for artists to have a deep understanding of the link between surface expression and its cause in anatomy and his lectures

Figure 4.33 William Hunter’s Ideal School of Anatomy, Library, Museum and House 1784.

demonstrated this.<sup>164</sup> But Hunter did not consider the body to be a machine, instead he had strong beliefs in the status of the human form based on the relationship of the mind to the ‘divine architect’, i.e. God.<sup>165</sup> In this way Hunter’s apparently mechanistic anatomical instruction was endowed with a mysticism that evoked the connection between the power of the human mind and that of creativity that had formed the universe. It is then perhaps no coincidence that

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<sup>161</sup> Puetz “Design Instruction for Artisans...” 1999, p. 234.

<sup>162</sup> See for example the testimony of John Pye, the engraver SC36 q. 1311, p. 112.

<sup>163</sup> Op cit, check page. SC36 Appendix II notes that the Royal Academy had regular anatomical lectures between the years of 1824-1833, which were in fact, the most regular of the lectures held (SC36 p. 200).

<sup>164</sup> Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 194.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 193.



Hunter's model for a school of anatomy should include a circular theatre in which to play out these essentially Neoplatonic theories (see Figure 4.33).<sup>166</sup>

For Benjamin Robert Haydon this was the tradition of dissection-based anatomy that he absorbed through his education at the Royal Academy school as well as being profoundly influenced by Charles Bell's text *The Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression as connected with the Fine Arts* (1806).<sup>167</sup> Bell though a surgeon had a strong interest in design and had been on the SDUK School of Design Committee in 1834.<sup>168</sup> The surgeon placed great emphasis on the science of anatomy versus the superstitious opposition to dissection.<sup>169</sup> He also claimed that this study was essential to the arts of design calling it the "grammar of that language", and identifying anatomy as the basis of expression in both the individual and in the scene as a whole. In so doing Bell drew on the relationship of the dissected body, the expression of the *istoria* and the status of the artist that had been established by Alberti:

The expressions, attitudes, and movements of the human figure are the characters of this language, adapted to convey the effect of historical narration, as well as to shew [sic.] the working of human passion, and to give the most striking and lively indications of intellectual power and energy.<sup>170</sup>

In this chapter the important relationship between the human body and a concept of design has been established. Although this derived from Renaissance Humanist scholarship, it was still very active amongst the fine artists of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries. In this model, the artist laboured to study the Platonic ideals within art and nature creating a repository not simply of these objects but of their principles – these were inscribed in the mind through geometry. Yet the key to the expression of this geometry was the dissected study of the human body and in this, the form of Neoplatonic theories was re-enacted within London's dissection theatres. As with Camillo's Vitruvian theatre, once this embodiment of universal geometry had been utilised, the mind of the artist

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<sup>166</sup> However this was never built and he finally opened a theatre in Great Windmill Street that was square, although the seating arrangements are unknown (Ibid., p. 231)

<sup>167</sup> Pidgley *Benjamin Robert Haydon* 1986, pages not numbered.

<sup>168</sup> University College London Archives SDUK 7 Small Minutes Book 1831-34, pp. 18-24.

<sup>169</sup> Bell *The Anatomy of Philosophy of Expression* 1844, p. iv.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

became divine, allowing him or her to create a work of art that was constructed around the logic of the entire scene, its *istoria*. As such both the work of art and the figures within it were imbued with life, the artist becoming god-like.

Although one may suggest that this was not in the mind of many artists in the early nineteenth-century, the subject of the human body was discussed at length in the Select Committee, particularly as to whether it was an appropriate subject for a worker to study. As we shall see, the Benthamites did favour the study of the human form though, I suggest for a very different reason than to make the minds of workers divine. Rather the Benthamites changed the meaning of the body employing a scientific metaphor, one that was drawn from the same mechanisms as Neoplatonic art theory.



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# Chapter 5

## Benthamite Design

This chapter proposes that although the role of the artist as ‘god-maker’ was traditionally related to the study of the human body, this model of design did not sit comfortably with the Philosophical Radicals’ other theories. Rather it is suggested here that they favoured an alternative and new concept of design, one that was derived from the physical and moral sciences, or ‘useful’ knowledge. In order to explore this, the chapter begins by examining the ideal of the factory system and considering where the design process was thought to exist within it. This investigation shows the problematic relationship between maintaining a harmonious factory system and employing a creative designer whose skills were associated with the empowering legacy of Neoplatonism. The teaching of anatomy, which was central to the Neoplatonic power of an artist is particularly focused on and the development of a new practice towards its teaching is outlined.

This begins by considering the social effects of the Anatomy Act and the role of the Benthamites in its passage. The chapter then goes on to consider how the political currency of the corpse was utilised to transform the view of the working class towards themselves and their society. This is explored by considering the dissection of Jeremy Bentham, which took place in 1832 on his request.

Bentham’s dissection is considered as a symbolic act by which his followers were shown the way in which to utilise the human body through an emphasis of its physicality, through a sense of it as the site of happiness symbolised through health or disease, as a detachment of happiness from virtue and as a model of the intricate structure of society. This discussion continues by going on to discuss how these ideas surrounding the body were pursued in the emphasis placed on physiology.

The chapter concludes by attempting to pinpoint a model of the Benthamite designer and suggests that an appropriate model was found in the figure of the



Baconian scientist. This relied on one main idea - that the creative act did not come from an empowered individual, but rather from the servant of a pre-existent system. Thus the notion of an autonomous system in which a self-disciplined worker is employed is highlighted as being central to the concept of Benthamite design. The chapter ends by explaining the relationship of self-discipline and pro-active practice, as opposed to reflective investigation.

## The Ideal of the Factory System

In his 1835 *Philosophy of Manufactures* Andrew Ure envisaged the ideal factory system. This was a mechanistic vision in which the factory as a whole was viewed as an extension of the machine and the idea was further emphasised by Ure through the importance he placed on the concept of harmony within the factory. Harmony was created by the division of set tasks based around machines that “demanded” the operator to work in a particular way so ensuring the efficient production of the finished item.<sup>1</sup> The machinery thus ensured a specific activity from the worker and resulted in their disciplined behaviour without the need for constant supervision.<sup>2</sup> But in order to achieve this, Ure like the engineer James Nasmyth, believed that the workers had to be taught to respect the “...unvarying regularity of the complex automaton”,<sup>3</sup> i.e. the harmony of the factory system; this demanded their education.

As described in Chapter 4 Nasmyth suggested exhibiting Classical objects<sup>4</sup> within the factory premises in order to imbue the workers with a sense of taste and a knowledge of superior style. But for the engineer the display of these objects involved far more than simply imbuing Classicism, rather Nasmyth envisaged the antiquities to have a more profound influence on the workers:

The absence of such objects to engage their [the workers'] attention is one of the great causes why, after taking their meals at home, the men retire, to occupy the few leisure moments that remain before the working hour, to the public-house, in order to enjoy the companionable discourse

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<sup>1</sup> Ure *The Philosophy of Manufactures* 1967, pp. 24-25.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 24-5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Nasmyth recommended displayed “ancient utensils” because they exhibited “[t]he employment of the smallest number of lines in giving form” (SC36 q. 312, p. 30).

with each other which the opportunity affords; they are induced to commence a system of dissipation, which is not only deeply injurious to their own morals, but also to the interests of their employers, returning in an excited state to their work, which evil might not only be removed by the above mentioned means, but results would be produced not only tending greatly to their own enjoyments, but ultimately to the extension of the natural prosperity...<sup>5</sup>

In a similar way Ure considered that there would be a breakdown of the harmony within the factory system if the workers' loyalties were influenced by other authorities than the mechanisms of the factory itself, such as a Union,<sup>6</sup> alcohol<sup>7</sup> or the individual will of the worker. In particular Ure considered that a 'cunning' or skilful operative was extremely threatening as "[b]y the infirmity of human nature it happens, that the more skilful the workman, the more self-willed and intractable he is apt to become...".<sup>8</sup> To avoid this problem the workers had to be educated to appreciate the system that they worked in because "...injury resulting from the violation of the rules of automatic labour [is caused by ignorance]... just as mankind at large can never fully estimate the evils consequent upon an infraction of God's moral law".<sup>9</sup> To show the benefits of this obedience, Edward Baines illustrated his *History of Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* (1835) with picturesque views of factories possessing clean and spacious interiors and filled with equally clean and obedient looking machine operatives (Figure 5.1 overleaf).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> SC36 q. 315, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> Op cit., p. 41.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 280-281.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>10</sup> Contrast this image with the list of crimes that demanded fines and penalties in the Strutts' mills. This gives both an example of the type of law-enforcement that took place in the mills but also a sense of the actual people that worked there (Fitton & Wadsworth *The Arkwrights and the Strutts* 1964, pp. 234-237).



Figure 5.1 Illustration from E. Baines's *History of Cotton Manufacture* 1835.

What is interesting about both the books of Baines and Ure is that neither of them really dealt with where the design process took place within the factory system. Any discussion of the origin of designs was avoided and instead the reader was lulled into thinking that the “beautiful designs” that were churned out at “the rate of a mile in the hour” were the result of the activities of the “four- or five- colour calico printing machines”<sup>11</sup> and not the result of human action and creativity. In another book specifically on cotton manufacture Ure again did not seem to discuss the designing process and the weaver is portrayed as already being in possession of a pattern, marked up so as to “...direct the weaver which of these connexions is to be formed with each treadle”.<sup>12</sup> To discover where the design process was thought to occur within the factory system is not easy therefore, although there is some discussion of this during the Select Committee. But what should first be considered is the issue of whether the systems envisaged by Baines and Ure were actually in place during the 1830s or at least in the minds of the members of the Select Committee.

In Baines' text the author ensures his reader of the truth of his portrayal of mechanical and manufacturing history by explaining that in order to research the book he consulted many knowledgeable experts. These included Edward Strutt, John Bowring and four factory inspectors, one of whom Thomas Jones Howell

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<sup>11</sup> Ure *The Philosophy of Manufactures* 1967, p. 369.

<sup>12</sup> Ure *The Cotton Manufacture of Great Britain* 1836, p. 278.

was a witness on the 1836 session of the Select Committee.<sup>13</sup> As such it is implied that the book has resulted from a scientific investigation and this is reiterated throughout the text by Baines' overt use of documented evidence by which he refutes previous writers' opinions.<sup>14</sup> This research is also intimately connected to Benthamite-supported policies such as the Factory Inspections Act, as well as drawing on the experience of 'first order' and 'second order' Benthamites like Strutt, Bowring, and Charles Poulett Thomson<sup>15</sup> (another member of the 1835 Committee and involved with the Normal School of Design Council). Thus there is an intimate connection between Governmental policy and the creation of a historical review of the manufacturing situation – a study we know from Chapter 1 to be aligned to a Baconian agenda.

By contrast, Ure's text is less a study of the actual situation in Britain and more a consideration of the theory of manufacture as the title of his book suggests. On this point Steve Edwards (2001) comments that the factory environment portrayed in Ure's text was essentially fantasy.<sup>16</sup> But the ideal of the fully mechanised and automated factory was a particularly influential one especially amongst the Benthamite members of the Select Committee,<sup>17</sup> and even though the majority of factories during the 1830s and 1840s had a workforce of under one hundred employees,<sup>18</sup> there did exist potent examples of the fully mechanised factory within the immediate experience of the Select Committee members. Edward Strutt's family were a prime example of this as has been outlined in Chapter 1. So was the business of John Heathcoat, who like Strutt attended both the first and second sessions of the inquiry. Heathcoat had taken an active role in the organisation of the mechanised system within his own large lace factory in Tiverton, which he had established after moving away from Nottinghamshire due to an attack by Luddites on his first factory there.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Baines *The History of Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* 1835, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> See for example the discussion of the actual inventor of the machine for spinning by rollers (Ibid., pp. 121-137).

<sup>15</sup> Finer "The transmission of Benthamite ideas 1820-50" in *Studies in the Growth of Nineteenth-Century Government* 1972, p. 11-32.

<sup>16</sup> Edwards "Factory and Fantasy in Andrew Ure" 2001, pp. 19-20.

<sup>17</sup> Berg *The Machinery Question* 1980, p. 273.

<sup>18</sup> Op cit.

<sup>19</sup> English *The Textile Industry* 1969, pp. 129-132.



Figure 5.2 The Heathcoat lace manufactory at Tiverton, sketched by L. E. Reed in 1836.

Heathcoat had designed his own machine for bobbin-net manufacture and had literally deconstructed the complicated process of lace making traditionally done by hand.<sup>20</sup> This was initially technically difficult for him to understand and he admitted that all he first observed when watching a woman producing lace was “[a] pretty heap of chaotic material... like peas in a frying-pan dancing about!”<sup>21</sup> Eventually though he did produce a very successful machine and established a partnership with two other men in Loughborough based on his invention.<sup>22</sup> Figure 5.2 shows his Tiverton mill, which adopted the Puritanical style of other factory buildings (discussed in Chapter 4) and housed 300 machines powered by water from the River Exe.<sup>23</sup> Thus the apparent fantasy of Ure’s desire to replace the inefficient hands of the workers with machines that would do the same job more reliably<sup>24</sup> had actually been achieved in Heathcoat’s factory. It is therefore within this setting that we must consider the problem of the design process. In order to do this it is useful to begin by reconsidering some of the Select Committee examples of superior design discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

When perusing those suggestions it becomes apparent that the examples provided of good design were generally linked to an individual named designer, while other patterns identified as inferior design tended to be explained by the lack of direction and authorship that came from an unnamed and untrained worker. The

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>21</sup> Heathcoat quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Edwards “Factory and Fantasy in Andrew Ure” 2001, p. 18.

superior designer most commonly named during the 1835-6 inquiry was John Flaxman who was employed by Joshua Wedgwood among others. To employ a highly skilled fine artist, one who understood the ‘god-making’ process, for the production of manufactured goods in the eighteenth-century was a relatively ‘enlightened’ practice.<sup>25</sup> Wedgwood also employed John Bacon among others, who was in addition, the long time employee of Coade and Sealy. Bacon had been the artificial stone manufacturer’s chief designer from 1771 until his death in 1797.<sup>26</sup> But although these designers produced superior quality work they were employed *outside* the factory system, and thus the design was imported into the mechanised environment.<sup>27</sup>

Figure 5.3 ‘Tortoiseshell’ Earthenware Plate, Wedgwood c. 1760.

As well as named artists, there were also unnamed designers or even designs that had evolved through the cumulative activity of many workers;<sup>28</sup> a practice that even occurred in sophisticated businesses like Wedgwood and Boulton’s.<sup>29</sup> This more basic level of design activity supplied a company’s rapid turnover in every day patterns produced in addition to objects for the higher end of the market. These two levels of production required different timescales and modes of manufacture.

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<sup>25</sup> Thornton *Form and Decoration* 1985, p. 293.

<sup>26</sup> Clifford “John Bacon and the Manufacturers” 1985, p. 290. See also Bacon working for Derby and Etruria porcelain firms (Young *English Porcelain* 1999, p. 96).

<sup>27</sup> Tattersall “Henry Webber” 1985, p. 37-38.

<sup>28</sup> Clifford “Concepts of Invention, Identity and Imitation...” 1999, p. 245.

<sup>29</sup> Boulton employed Francis Eginton within his factory (Young *English Porcelain* 1999, pp. 96-97).



When considering the example of Wedgwood's Etruria factory this two-tier system is apparent. Etruria was initially established for the production of the manufacturer's Neoclassical wares, objects considered as fine quality ornaments in comparison with his range of more useful ceramics.<sup>30</sup> In opposition to this specially designed range, Wedgwood's more 'useful' wares were not unique to the firm being "...undoubtedly similar to those of his former partner Thomas Whieldon" (see Figure 5.3), and their production was initially separated from the range of Neoclassical objects by being manufactured in an alternative location that was not specially built for the task.<sup>31</sup> It is this more ordinary type of design method that seems to have been widespread in the British design practice of the 1830s. Witnesses testify to the lack of any real designer or understanding of art within the factory or workshop environment. For example James Morrison commented that although there were persons "...called designers, yet they have not been educated as such, and in point of fact, they know little of the principles of art".<sup>32</sup> Similarly John B. Papworth suggested that there was "...a great want of clever designers" in furniture and other areas of the applied arts.<sup>33</sup> Thomas Jones Howell noted that there were no designers in Coventry (the centre of the ribbon trade) and that the manufacturers in that town obtained designs from travelling professional designers.<sup>34</sup> The professional and educated designer was therefore not a common occurrence in the 1830s and if he or she did exist, then design tended to be imported into the mechanised factory. But there had been a good example during the eighteenth-century of the employment of an in-house designer within a highly mechanised manufacturing system and this was again within Wedgwood's Etruria factory.

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<sup>30</sup> Honey *Wedgwood Ware* 1948, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup> SC35 q. 171, p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> SC35 q. 1310, p. 95.

<sup>34</sup> SC36 q. 130, p. 15.

Figure 5.4 The Portland Vase produced by Josiah Wedgwood, c.1786-90.

In 1782 Wedgwood employed a resident designer Henry Webber, whom he considered to be "...the first in his profession in England".<sup>35</sup> Webber created designs that complemented the firm's range of Neoclassical ware, and figure 5.4 shows one of his most important pieces - the copy of the Portland Vase produced in black jasper ware with white relief.<sup>36</sup> The design of this object demanded both archaeological and technical research that Webber partly undertook in Italy and other parts of Europe.<sup>37</sup> The sculptor's role was therefore as a designer akin to almost any fine art practitioner and the object itself was exhibited as a fine art piece with Wedgwood issuing tickets for the opening of its exhibition at the Wedgwood showroom in St. James's (off Piccadilly).<sup>38</sup> But unlike an independent artist the finished object that Webber produced was part of a professional agreement with Wedgwood who funded the designer's trip and claimed ownership of any patterns that were the outcome of the tour.<sup>39</sup> Through these methods Webber's position was differentiated from other resident designers that Wedgwood had previously employed and who the manufacturer had found to be problematic within the factory environment. These difficulties had arisen because artists of the calibre of Webber had been arrogant and

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<sup>35</sup> Tattersall "Henry Webber" 1985, p. 36.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Irwin *Neoclassicism* 1997, p. 213.

<sup>39</sup> Tattersall "Henry Webber" 1985, p. 38.



undisciplined.<sup>40</sup> This is hardly surprising given the issues that have been raised in the previous chapter where the position of artist was imbued with the status of a god. Naturally it seems this would be a quality seen as rather disruptive to a regimented factory system.<sup>41</sup>

In contrast to this and as well as being designer and modeller for Wedgwood,<sup>42</sup> Webber was importantly the 'Design Director' within the Etruria factory, a position that resulted in "...his eye and hand...[being] everywhere".<sup>43</sup> The disciplined environment that he created within the factory was intrinsic to the practical design activity of the workers and again this differentiated the sculptor's position from previous designers for Wedgwood. In the past an employed artist had

...lost all control of their works once they reached Etruria. Figures could be added or subtracted, bushes could appear in anatomically embarrassing areas...sizes could be reduced often with the result that it must have been difficult enough for the actual designer... to recognize the final product as his own.<sup>44</sup>

The idea that a designer had a presence in all areas of production within the factory was seen as necessary knowledge if he or she was to be successful. The calico printer and teacher Charles O'Brien (1789) had commented that to be a good designer one had to possess a combination of artistic and manual knowledge, so that the superior pattern-drawer had

...a knowledge of the business in every stage of its process, and consequently [would] be enabled to answer... how every intended effect may be obtained previous to the executive part being put into operation.<sup>45</sup>

In a similar way and during the intervening months before the opening of the Government Normal School of Design, a letter from Mr. Bucknell (another calico printer this time from Manchester) commented that if the principles of design education as they had been laid out for teaching by the Normal School

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Young *English Porcelain* 1999, p. 96.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>45</sup> O'Brien *The Callico Printers' Assistant* 1789, p. 2. See also Puetz "Design Instruction for Artisans in eighteenth-century Britain" 1999, p. 235, p. 239.

Council were to remain just that, then he "...was afraid that for any practically useful purpose, connected with the business to which at least I belong, they will be found utterly useless".<sup>46</sup> This was because he considered that a good designer had to understand the specific mechanical process for which he or she was designing.<sup>47</sup> Samuel Wiley from the japanning firm Jennens and Bettridge of Birmingham noted that it was indispensable for a person designing to "...be acquainted with the manufacturing branch of the business".<sup>48</sup> Benjamin Spalding also suggested that the advantage in the French manufacturing system was that he/she was a "...practical manufacturer, who makes the drawing, [and] is a well-educated artist".<sup>49</sup> Likewise Baron Von Klenze the Prussian architect also noted that it was imperative for a designer to be acquainted with the branch of manufacture for which s/he was designing.<sup>50</sup> On the same point but in relation to a different material Robert Harrison commented that

...the principal difficulty arises from the circumstance of men not having been brought up in this country to design for silk; it is very different to designing for printers, from the circumstance that it is necessary a man should be conversant with the principle of weaving, before he can make a proper design in silk. If we could only get designs in this country, we should be able to find parties that could put them on ruled paper for weaving.<sup>51</sup>

James Skene also noted that if a design could not be transferred effectively to the loom, then it was wasted.<sup>52</sup> The need to understand design and the process of putting the pattern on ruled paper was similarly discussed by Monsieur Claude Guillotte who was a manufacturer of jacquard looms. He noted that the designer of the pattern for weaving must also understand the process of *mise en carte*, where the design was transferred to ruled paper, in order to prepare it for the punching of the cards that the loom 'read'. If a designer did not understand this process then it was virtually impossible to create successful patterns for weaving.

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<sup>46</sup> British Library MS Add 31218 f. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Questioner's phrasing SC35 q. 803, p. 54.

<sup>49</sup> SC35 q. 303, p. 23.

<sup>50</sup> SC36 qq. 2263-2265, p. 194.

<sup>51</sup> SC35 q. 459, p. 33.

<sup>52</sup> SC35 q. 1145, p. 82.



Figure 5.5 Lined paper design by London designer Stephen Wilson c. 1824.

Figure 5.5 is an example of a design constructed for ruled paper in which the designer has a clear sense of the necessity of understanding that need for the design to fit within the mechanics of the weaving. This was a pattern that was produced for perhaps one of the first Jacquard looms in South London.<sup>53</sup>

Webber's design process was part of the discipline or harmony of the factory system, a quality much in demand in Etruria as the factory operated "...under the maxim 'to make such Machines of the Men as cannot err'".<sup>54</sup> However the maintenance of this loyal discipline was not easy, and there are several reports within the Select Committee that suggest that Webber was fairly unique in achieving this. John Millward a lace manufacturer from Olney in Buckinghamshire explained that the lace industry that he was involved in was not mechanised (like Heathcoat's). This resulted in problems with discipline and loyalty amongst the workers. The witness explains that

[t]he manufacturer appoints a day when his "workers", as they are called, meet him at an inn, and he buys the lace, and perhaps gives them new

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<sup>53</sup> Schoeser & Rufey *English and American Textiles* 1989, p. 62.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

patterns and parchments to work on, and sees no more of them until the next journey, which may be a month or six weeks afterwards.<sup>55</sup>

Millward notes that this practice was very unsatisfactory because the patterns given to the ‘workers’ tended to be sold on by them so that he felt he could only trust about one in forty of those employed to make his lace.<sup>56</sup> In addition to this, the workers never invented their own patterns according to Millward, and this resulted in their output being generally of a low standard.<sup>57</sup> Dr. Bowring, who was questioning concluded that “Is not that an evil that must necessarily attach to a manufacture that is purely domestic, and when the labourer is not immediately under the control of the master?” – to this the witness generally agrees.<sup>58</sup>

Figure 5.6 Plaques of Flora and Pomona by John Bacon, c. 1775-1777.

A similar problem seemed to occur with objects that were produced through casting. John Henning Senior noted that no matter how long and arduous his creative process was (from “careful drawings” reconstructing the “mutilated [Elgin] marbles” to the production of intaglios “...from which the casts have been taken”<sup>59</sup>), once a cast was produced, it ran the risk of being stolen and copied.<sup>60</sup> Figure 5.6 shows a pair of plaques for Coade & Sealy that were designed by John Bacon. These are both made from Coade’s artificial stone but

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<sup>55</sup> SC36 q. 158, p. 17.

<sup>56</sup> SC36 qq. 165-166, p. 17.

<sup>57</sup> SC36 q. 161, p. 17.

<sup>58</sup> SC36 q. 167, pp. 17-18.

<sup>59</sup> SC35 q. 852, p. 59.

<sup>60</sup> SC35 q. 853, p. 59.



the company did produce similar reliefs and medallions at a cheaper price in plaster of Paris. These were acquired by many firms who used them as their master models, by which they produced their own versions of Coade's products.<sup>61</sup> These objects would become less and less distinct as the moulds became more used and battered and as such would result in their contours losing their original crispness, a quality that was considered the key selling point for Coade and Sealy as their product appeared to defy time.<sup>62</sup> What is interesting from both of these examples, is the idea that these bad practices in factory discipline which accentuated the tendency for drinking (meeting in the inn) and dishonesty amongst the working class, also seemed to result in bad design – again here design choices and morality were interlinked this time with reference to the ideal order of the factory.

The employment of Webber is also interesting to consider in relation to the status of Webber himself, who though undergoing the education to provide him with the improved status of the fine artist, remained enmeshed within the factory system itself. Thus his practice which involved both the simultaneous imposition of control of design and moral behaviour within a mechanised factory, also maintained Webber's own status as less an artist, and more an employee. As such perhaps more so than Wedgwood's use of superior designers external to the factory, the engagement of a designer that worked within the factory as both the source of designs and part of the mechanism of discipline was truly novel. But why, according to the Select Committee witnesses, did this not immediately become the common practice in factories?

Though James Nasmyth similarly identified the role of the design director terming this the master mechanic, the effect of this role appeared to differ from the job that Webber undertook. Nasmyth noted:

...the master mechanic, supposing his mind has arrived at a great state of cultivation, as regards a taste for the fine arts, in reference to its application to manufacturing purposes, requires, in order to bring forward those requirements in to actual existence, to employ agents, those agents

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<sup>61</sup> Clifford "John Bacon and the Manufacturers" 1985, p. 293.

<sup>62</sup> Coade and Sealy *Coade's Gallery* 1799, opening page.

are his workmen; and if there exists, as there does at present, too great a disparity between the ideas of the two, that in many cases the forms which he wishes his workmen to adopt are not those produced by the workmen, which leads to a very serious inconvenience and frequent disappointment, occasioning, in any attempt at introducing elegance of form, a very great loss of time to the master in giving necessary instruction to the men.<sup>63</sup>

Robert Butt the manager of the bronze and porcelain department at Howell and James noted that the excellence of French objects, particularly ones that involved the modelling of the human form like clocks and candelabras, would have been "...entirely spoiled by the injudicious finishing of muscles, draperies and extremities by an ignorant workman".<sup>64</sup> This was a design process that Crabb also described noting that in French wallpaper production, though the designs were usually obtained from a journeyman, the execution of the finished work was imaginative and of a fine quality, demonstrating that it is the worker him/herself that has these skills.<sup>65</sup> The witness claimed that "...if we had the very same blocks with which this set of paper is printed in France, we in England should not get so good and well-executed a paper".<sup>66</sup> Again the suggestion was that in British factories there was a separation between the ability of the designer and the workers. Charles Harriot Smith the architectural modeller also noted that it was difficult to find assistants to carry out his designs<sup>67</sup> particularly as they needed to be conversant in drawing, a language that was essential to the communication between master and workman.<sup>68</sup> Charles Robert Cockerell (the architect) gave the same answer when questioned on the availability of talented workmen. He commented that

...in our business we have occasion chiefly for ornamental plasterers, carvers in wood, marble, stone, casters in iron, moulders of iron, chasers in bronze, and ornamental painters, &c. &c. I find that we have had a very great dearth of late years... of artists to fulfil those duties.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> SC36 q. 310, p. 29.

<sup>64</sup> SC35 q. 567, p. 39.

<sup>65</sup> SC35 q. 993, p. 71.

<sup>66</sup> SC35 q. 994, p. 71.

<sup>67</sup> These tended to be directed by architects (SC35 q. 631, p. 44).

<sup>68</sup> SC35 q. 636, p. 44.

<sup>69</sup> SC35 q. 1431, p. 101.



Similarly George J. Morant was asked whether he had "...considerable difficulty in getting people to execute the ideas that are given to them".<sup>70</sup> He replied in the affirmative, noting that he did "...not know half a dozen persons in London that we could apply to, at the present moment, to execute some things which have been done".<sup>71</sup> It therefore seemed that though the system was generally in place for a design director, the communication that appeared to be so seamless between the director and the workmen under Webber's management was not generally in place. The difficulty with the situation was perhaps that in reality the ideal of the designer/disciplinarian was hard to find. As Wedgwood had previously discovered the well-educated designer had also gained an inherent sense of independence resulting in disruptiveness to the smooth running of the automated system. Ure had described this as the result of "...human infirmity...that the more skilful the workman, the more self-willed and intractable he is apt to become".<sup>72</sup> A similar idea that a trained artist would dismiss the manufacturing environment had also been identified by some of the Select Committee witnesses. Charles Robert Cockerell, though desiring skilled workers commented that:

I do not think such knowledge [derived from fine art training] compatible with the occupations of artizans, and the encouragements to it would mislead them, and interfere with their proper callings, and right division of labour, in which excellence already requires all their ability.<sup>73</sup>

Similarly, John B. Papworth also considered that a fine art education would encourage "...young men... to leave the intended object to pursue that which is more accredited and honoured, and to the disadvantage of the manufacturing arts".<sup>74</sup> David Ramsey Hay also noted that after a little artistic education, the students often "...become so disgusted with their humble profession that they will not work at it".<sup>75</sup>

But within the Committee proceedings there was not only the suggestion that the designer if educated would reject the sphere of manufactures and his/her rightful

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<sup>70</sup> Asked by Mr. Hope SC36 q. 504, p. 44.

<sup>71</sup> Morant's answer – *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Ure *The Philosophy of Manufactures* 1967, pp. 280-281.

<sup>73</sup> SC35 q. 1460, p. 104.

<sup>74</sup> SC35 q. 1286, p. 93.

<sup>75</sup> SC36 q. 479, p. 42.

place within the automated system, but also that good design was not simply reliant on a educated designer whose disciplining ‘hands and eyes’ were everywhere. Rather some witnesses suggested that in order to achieve truly superior design, not only the director but the workers themselves must all be trained in the arts of design. In this way it was proposed that, in addition to the designer having a knowledge of the practical processes in which s/he was working, the artisan though knowledgeable about practice, must also understand the process of designing. This was a knowledge that John Jobson Smith considered had to be extended through the entire production process even down to modellers, if designs were going to be truly successful.<sup>76</sup>

John Henning (Senior) described how the Paisley weavers had also been the designers of their own patterns. This ensured the success of their designs because the skill of the artist was combined with the knowledge of the weaving process, enabling the weavers to “...transfer [the pattern] to the cloth by what they called ‘reading it on the holly brod’”, a process he understood to “ ...correspond to the *mise en carte* of the French”.<sup>77</sup> A previous witness Mr. Thomas Field Gibson (the Spitalfields manufacturer specialising in silk and velvet production) added an additional element to this process. He commented that in Lyons, “after... [the design] has been produced the weaver introduces a considerable modification into the pattern itself”.<sup>78</sup> By this the witness inferred that the design process in France did not end with the handing over of a completed pattern that was then produced in the mechanised environment, rather that the workers themselves were skilled enough in both artistic principles and production to make decisions on design throughout the weaving process. In agreement with this Guillotte concluded that unlike the British, and despite the reduction of many skilled workers in the French system, “[t]he *metteur en carte* is himself an artist”.<sup>79</sup> Thus for many of the witnesses, design could only be a successful process if it occurred throughout the production of an object by equally skilled designers and workers. But although this was the ideal there was one central dilemma with this model of production.

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<sup>76</sup> SC35 q. 146, p. 12.

<sup>77</sup> SC35 q. 867, p. 60.

<sup>78</sup> SC35 qq. 411-412, p. 30.

<sup>79</sup> SC35 q. 824, p. 56.



On the one hand the learning of manufacturing processes were considered to debase the skill of the fine artist, while on the other hand, the acquisition of fine art skills by artisans or in Ure's scheme 'operatives' would upset the intrinsic hierarchy and discipline of the factory. This was because in order to produce good design a worker must combine this higher education with a detailed manual knowledge of an entire process of production, inevitably providing him or her with a greater sense of authority and skill. Skill had been deemed threatening to the factory by Ure. The factors, impinging on what a design education should be, seem to be encapsulated in words of Charles Robert Cockerell:

There is a wide distinction between art and fine art; in the latter the knowledge of artizans whose bread is earned in laborious work, must be always very limited, compared with those who have an original genius for it, and have been brought up in the highest schools, and with the best opportunities of instruction. This knowledge is a science of itself, and requires a life to attain. There is every respect among artizans towards men of superior knowledge, they bow to them, and follow them implicitly if they have reputation for merit; but I apprehend that any attempt at a general diffusion of the higher principles would be futile.<sup>80</sup>

Clearly there was an intimate relationship between design knowledge, hierarchy and power within the factory and workshop environment. Cockerell's words also echo the comments made by the report on Haydon's teaching in the School for Promoting Practical Design in 1841. How it asked, could an education in human anatomy that the great artists Raphael and Leonardo spent a lifetime doing and still "...considered they had never fully accomplished", be valuable to inferior students?<sup>81</sup>

## **Learning from the Human Form**

As has been noted in Chapter 4, Benjamin Robert Haydon was a great believer in the importance of the human form as the corner stone of an artistic education. In this he had emerged from the Neoplatonic tradition of the Royal Academy. He continued to advocate the study of the human form even when considering the teaching of artisans. He noted in his diary that when consulted on the proposed

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<sup>80</sup> SC35 q. 1460, p. 104.

<sup>81</sup> Anon "National Instruction in Art: Schools of Design" 1841, p. 284.



curriculum for the Manchester Mechanics' Institute in 1838, the subject arose about the appropriateness of anatomical study. Haydon wrote "[s]ome wished an elementary school to be added before beginning the Figure, but I urged the necessity of uniting the Artist and the Mechanic, as in Greece and Italy...".<sup>82</sup> This was therefore also the education that he aimed to give his students when the institution was opened for the design school of the Society for Promoting Practical Design in Leicester Square (Savile House – see Figure 5.7 for location).<sup>83</sup> In 1838 a general outline of some of the lectures taking place at the institution were listed in *The Spectator*, and these included lessons in anatomy and physiology by Mr. Carpue, the dissectionist who had aided Thomas Banks.<sup>84</sup>

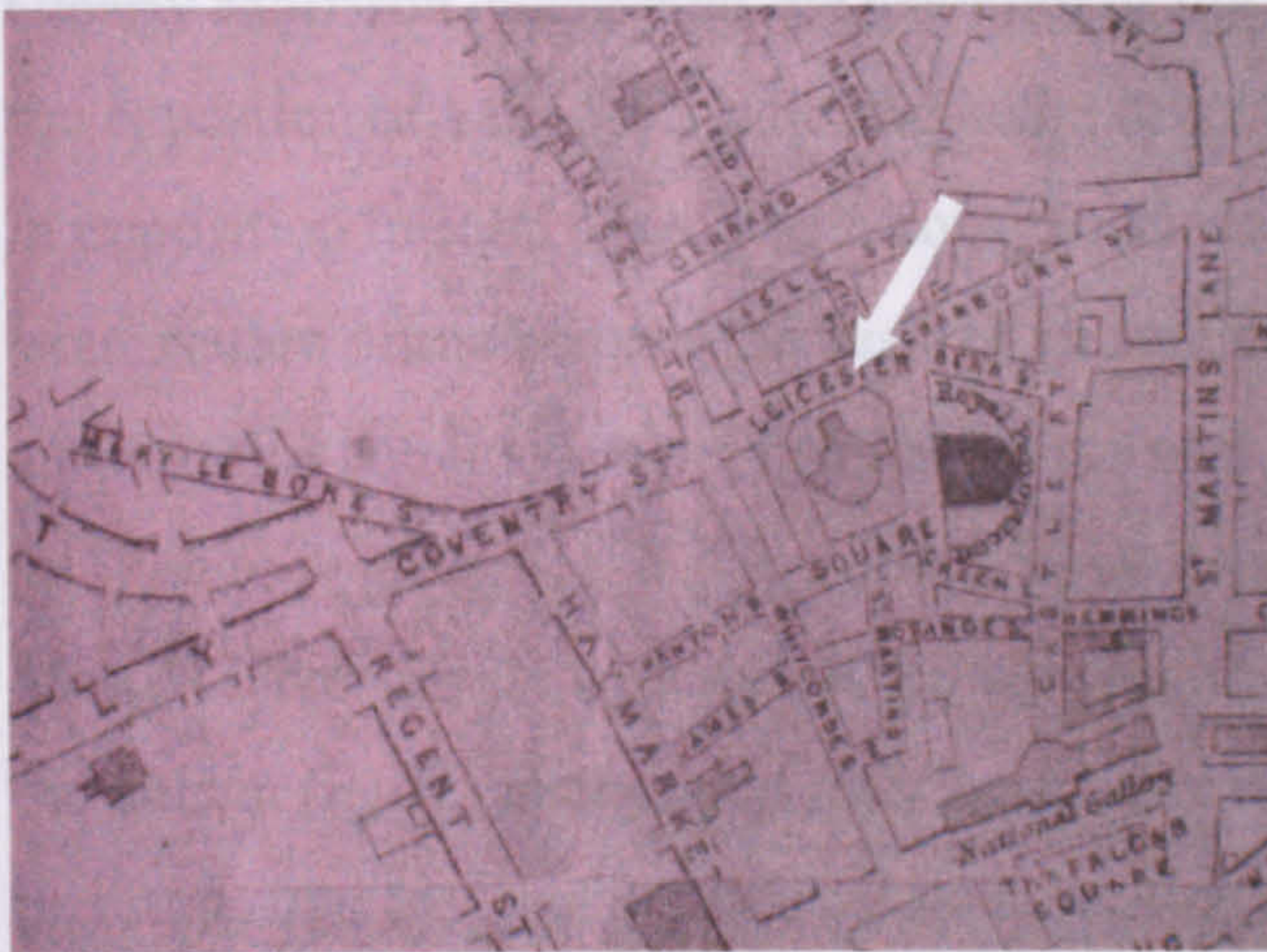


Figure 5.7 Location of Design School of the Society for Promoting Practical Design (c.1838-1841).<sup>85</sup>

The decision to teach anatomical studies had been a very specific one because the new Normal School of Design did not offer this in its curriculum. The 1838 *Spectator* article suggests that this omission had been "...to allay the jealous

<sup>82</sup> Haydon *The Diary of Benjamin Robert Haydon* Vol. 4 1963, p. 454 (June 25).

<sup>83</sup> Anon *The Spectator* Sept. 15 1838, p. 881. It seems that Savile House was a slightly problematic venue. In the Leicester Square Scrap Book it was described thus: "The establishment became so divided by different interests, that few could tell whether it was a theatre, a wine vaults, a billiard-room, a coffee shop, a gunsmith's, or a Royal Academy; of, if they could, they never knew, amidst the ascending and descending steps, and doors and passages, which one must take to get any where... A confusion of sounds further tends to bewilder the visitor; the noise of everything is heard every where else. The click of Billiard-balls, the music of *poses plastiques*, the thwacking of single-sticks, the cracking of rifles.... All mingle with each other..." (quoted in Sheppard *The Survey of London* Vol. 34 1966, p. 464).

<sup>84</sup> Anon *The Spectator* Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> 1838, p. 881.

<sup>85</sup> This map also marks the location of the Royal Panopticon because the map comes from that Deed of Settlement. However the Royal Panopticon building was not open when the school was active.



fears of the Royal Academy”.<sup>86</sup> But I suggest that there were more reasons than simply territorialism at work in the decision whether to provide instruction in anatomy. In the Select Committee there had been much debate regarding the appropriateness of that type of fine art education. James Morrison, who became a member of the Normal School Council, noted that:

For the improvement of the arts in connexion with manufactures we have no establishment whatever. At the Royal Academy the attention of the students is directed chiefly to the human figure. We have I believe private teachers in London, but I hear that they also apply themselves more particularly to the human figure, and in fact they educate people for painters and sculptors, rather than as artists for manufactures.<sup>87</sup>

Clearly Morrison considered the teaching of the human form as inappropriate for the education of a designer who was to be involved in manufacture. But this was in opposition to John Martin who considered that there should always be an examination of the body at the basis of an art education even for manufactures, and that this should involve detailed anatomical understanding, from the skeleton through to the muscles, just as Alberti had suggested was appropriate for the fine artist.<sup>88</sup> James Skene who was asked whether there was a deficiency in drawing the human figure, commented that “I would make it a rule of that establishment [his ideal one for teaching design], that the first class should be that one in which instruction is given in chalk drawing on a large scale from the round [i.e. life drawing]”.<sup>89</sup> Yet the same witness also noted that after having studied the first classes in art [i.e. fine art skills such as anatomical study], he had noticed that students at the School of the Board of Trustees in Edinburgh, though having “...come there with a view towards the useful arts have quitted it and become artists themselves”.<sup>90</sup> Thus there seemed for Skene to be the dilemma of whether the teaching of anatomy was suitable for artisans. This view was reiterated by John P. Papworth who was to be the first superintendent of the Normal School of Design. He explained that the success of France in manufactures was because “...they seem to have an art of design in employment, perfectly in union with

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> SC35 q. 170, pp. 13-14.

<sup>88</sup> SC35 qq. 920-922, p. 64.

<sup>89</sup> SC35 q. 1129, p. 81.

<sup>90</sup> SC35 q. 1135, p. 81.

their manufactures; in fact, art dwells with manufacture more in France than in England”.<sup>91</sup> Yet he too, rather forcefully explained that a study of the human form was not appropriate for artisans:

...one of the events to be feared of an exhibition is, that by those higher departments of art, where human figures are the chief matter, young men might be tempted to leave the intended object to pursue that which is more accredited and honoured, and to the disadvantage of the manufacturing arts.<sup>92</sup>

What is particularly interesting about these comments is that what is being referred to, is now not simply the discipline within the factory, but in effect the harmony of the whole of society. It seemed that the question was being asked ‘if the human figure was to be taught to artisans, then how would there be a maintenance of the artisan class?’. In other words, how would the scheme of society with its various spheres be maintained? Cockerell again encapsulated the desirability of the dutiful but talented designer. In referring to the French ceramics painters, such as Jean-Baptiste Isabey (who was the miniaturist to Napoleon and a designer for Sèvres the porcelain manufacturer) Cockerell explained “I have seldom heard of these men, except that they were living in their own provinces, without much fame in the upper branches, but their skill honourably employed in assisting various manufactures”.<sup>93</sup>

Let us turn to the implications that these debates have on our understanding of the Radicals’ approach to design for manufactures. On this basis the policies of the Society for Promoting Practical Design that they were involved with, it is clear that the Benthamites must have forged an approach towards this difficult balance between the acquisition of skills and the maintenance of discipline within the factory. We know that the Benthamites favoured the widespread education of the working class and the diffusion of political knowledge and understanding, as well as the examination and critique of traditional institutions such as the Royal Society. It would therefore seem consistent that they would also favour the education of workers in fine art skills. Yet, though the School of

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<sup>91</sup> SC35 q. 1243, p. 90.

<sup>92</sup> SC35 q. 1286, p. 93.

<sup>93</sup> SC35 q. 1446, p. 103.



the Society for Promoting Practical Design may have indeed housed "...boys caricaturing Appollos [sic.] and Venuses in all the varieties of distortion..."<sup>94</sup> this did not necessarily mean that the School promoted the unbalancing of factory or, more generally, social norms. Furthermore, even if this was the intention of Haydon himself, there is some evidence to suggest that his ideas of appropriate education made an uneasy partnership with the Benthamites. In his diary entries around 1838 he comments that "[t]he State of Art is getting very interesting, if the Radicals do not spoil it".<sup>95</sup> Haydon does not really discuss the school very much in his diaries, which suggests that he was not deeply involved in it.<sup>96</sup>

The Philosophical Radicals examined the structures and effectiveness of institutions and the factory system envisaged as the mechanised fantasy that Ure had presented, was a favoured model by them for its measurable efficiency.<sup>97</sup> Furthermore although the Benthamites encouraged the education of the working class they also demanded as we have seen in Chapter 1 that there should be a consistency in the structure of society in order that it should 'work' efficiently. As Richard Burnet had commented, although self-advancement was supported "...still the lowest description of labour will be required, and that men must be found to do it".<sup>98</sup> Thus the conclusions of the evidence presented in the Select Committee demanded that the Radicals would inevitably need an alternative model of design, one that resulted in good design but did not disrupt the harmony of the mechanised and hierarchical factory system. In order to consider what this alternative model was, the legacy of Bentham's particular approach to society needs to be examined, but it is useful to begin this investigation by briefly returning to the Society for Promoting Practical Design. This group may have encouraged the study of the human form but did this necessarily comply with the traditional perception of this education as part of the god-making process of *disegno*? An answer to the question begins to emerge if one considers the actual title of the society.

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Haydon *The Diary of Benjamin Robert Haydon* 1963, p. 486.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. See 1838 for example (Vol. 4).

<sup>97</sup> Berg *The Machinery Question* 1980, p. 273.

<sup>98</sup> Burnet *A Word to the Members of the Mechanics' Institute* 1826, pp. 15-16.

## A New Practice

David Allen (1986) has noted how when a group of botanists in London were discussing the prospective title of their new society in 1836, they suggested that it should be called the *Practical* Botanists' Society of London.<sup>99</sup> Allen comments that this was because "[p]ractical' was one of the vogue words of the period and evidently denoted those who actually engaged in a pursuit – 'got their hands dirty', as it were – as opposed to merely professing it".<sup>100</sup> It would appear then that the Society for Promoting *Practical* Design was similarly concerned with the practicalities of design for manufactures. As we have seen a desire for practicality reflected much of the debate within the Select Committee as well as discussions that took place in the years before the Government Normal School of Design was properly established. In correspondence there had been comment made that practice should lie at the very heart of the project. Henry Bellenden Ker and John Lubbock agreed that unless the School was to be a complete and practical drawing school in which the basics of pattern-drawing, modelling and machinery drawing were to be undertaken, then it was not "...worth starting at all".<sup>101</sup> This was reiterated after the Government School of design had been established in 1837 when it was declared impractical by the author of an article in the *Mechanics' Magazine* who claimed that the expense of the evening classes at the new institution meant that "... the 'School of Design' will be *open to the labouring classes* in name alone...".<sup>102</sup> Thus in both the teaching of subjects and in the effectiveness of the institution it was demanded that design schools should centre on practical issues. This was the agenda that the Society for Promoting Practical Design appeared to be addressing. But given the relationship between the Radicals and the organisation, how could the teaching of human anatomy be seen to be practical given the threat it would apparently have on the order and harmony of the manufacturing system? It is in an alternative notion of the reason for design schools that I suggest the Radicals considered practicality. This was not necessarily to do with what was learned by the worker in relation to *design*

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<sup>99</sup> Allen *The Botanists* 1986, p. 11.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Royal Society Archives Lubbock Papers K.18 22/3 June 1834.

<sup>102</sup> Anon. *Mechanics' Magazine* Sat. June 3 1837, p. 131.



*practice*, but rather with what the artisan learnt about him or herself and their place within society. The practicalities offered by the Philosophical Radicals were centred on societal order, learning that would effectively teach the *practice of every day living*. The precedent for this type of learning was to be found in scientific institutions rather than artistic.

Anatomical study had been encouraged in other institutions with a similar agenda to the school of the Society for Promoting Practical Design, particularly Mechanics' Institutes. Regarding instruction supplied at the London Mechanics' Institute, Charles Toplis (one of the Institute's vice-presidents) noted that the organisation offered some education in design for artisans, including a class for studying the human figure.<sup>103</sup> What type of instruction this entailed is unclear, but there had been actual dissections carried out by George Birkbeck for artisans in the Institution during the summer of 1827.<sup>104</sup> These may have been intended for those interested in either artistic or scientific study, but what is clear is that the lectures were regularly attended, a report in the *Lancet* noting that the students watched with "‘deep interest’ and ‘profound attention’".<sup>105</sup> Perhaps this does not strike the modern reader as a particularly unusual event, but in the 1820s and '30s the associations with dissection were far more meaningful than simply the study of the human form, particularly for the lower class. An exploration of this situation gives some indication of what a dissection could symbolise during the early part of the nineteenth-century.

## The Anatomy Act

Let us reconsider the crucifixion of James Legg's body by the artist Thomas Banks and dissectionist Joseph Carpue; an event that was also reported by the *Lancet*:

A building was erected near the place of execution; a cross provided; the subject was nailed on the cross, the cross suspended; when the body, being warm, fell into the position that a dead body must fall into, let the cause of death be what it may. When cool, a cast was made, under the

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<sup>103</sup> SC35 q. 1500, p. 108.

<sup>104</sup> Richardson *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* 1989, p. 151.

<sup>105</sup> *ibid.*

direction of Mr. Banks, and when the mob had dispersed, it was removed to my theatre.<sup>106</sup>

It is difficult to know whether 'the mob' that is referred to by the article consisted of crowds there to witness the execution, or whether it was made up of those protesting against the use of the corpse. Given the date of this quasi-scientific experiment and the status of the corpse as a criminal, it is more likely that the former reason explains the mob's appearance in the event. But if the experiment had taken place in the 1830s, it would have been more likely that any crowd gathered in the vicinity of an anatomical theatre, would have been protesting about the dissection (or in this case the flaying) itself.

As Ruth Richardson (1989) explains, the common understanding (across all classes) of the human afterlife was that a person required their body to make the last journey and respond to the call for the final Resurrection. This meant that the dead body was treated very carefully in funerary rituals.<sup>107</sup> Following the same principle, if a corpse was abused and not buried, then the soul of the person would also be abused and would be unable to complete the crucial stage that allowed entry into eternity. As such to dissect the body had been treated as an additional and a horrific punishment, dealt to criminals since the early sixteenth-century in both Scotland and England.<sup>108</sup> Though this situation had been relatively successful over the centuries, there had been a steadily growing demand for the availability of corpses to dissect, particularly for medical studies. By the 1820s, this problem had become so extreme that an Anatomy Act was put forward following a Select Committee in 1828, the Report from this proposed a solution.<sup>109</sup> This 'solution' was that any body remaining 'unclaimed' in the workhouse at the time of death could be made available for the use of dissectionists. As Richardson points out, 'unclaimed' did not necessarily refer to an individual who had no relatives, but also to an individual whose relatives could simply not afford to pay for their burial.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Quoted in Bryant "Thomas Banks's anatomical crucifixion" 1991, p. 409.

<sup>107</sup> Richardson *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* 1989, pp. 3-29.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 100-120.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 123-127.



It is clear then, if one follows the logic of this development that the public would have reacted very forcefully to this, because the new Act effectively appeared to be punishing the poor simply for being poor.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, because of the illegal trade done by ‘resurrectionists’, i.e. graverobbers that the Act was intended to prevent, it was also noted that not simply was the proposed Act appearing to punish the poor, but also to save the bodies of the rich.<sup>112</sup> Their bodies had been in as much risk, and were perhaps more vulnerable, than those of the poor.<sup>113</sup> The Act was offensive to many classes perhaps for different reasons. The Earl of Radnor saw the Anatomy Act as in opposition to religious thinking. He reiterated his feelings about the Bill in a published letter to William Cobbett stating that the Act was attempting to “...root from the minds of men those religion opinions, which make a *distinction between the future state of human beings, and that of brutes*”. The author claimed that this action would affect “...*our faith, our hope, and our religious feeling*”.<sup>114</sup> Yet despite much opposition and large and violent demonstrations of working people all across the country the Act was passed in 1832.<sup>115</sup>

The Anatomy Act had huge implications for the working class because they laboured to remain in what was effectively always a precarious position within the social hierarchy. If one considers again Richard Burnet’s *Spiral of Success*, then it is clear that as one could aspire and rise up through the ranks, it was also possible by the same principle to move downwards. In response to the proposed Anatomy Act, one writer calling himself ‘One of the ‘Unclaimed’, wrote a letter to the *Lancet* in 1829 explaining how

...he had previously possessed property of the value of £20, 000, but was rendered a debtor by the foreclosing of a mortgage. As a result, his wife had died of grief, and he believed this had been a contributory factor in the deaths of his two daughters from consumption. He said that he was now ‘the poverty-stricken and emaciated inmate of a workhouse, without a single relation to notice me’.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>112</sup> Roberts *Mr. Warburton’s Anatomy Bill* 1843, p. 8.

<sup>113</sup> Op cit., p. 127.

<sup>114</sup> Radnor *Letter from the Earl of Radnor* 1832, pages not numbered.

<sup>115</sup> For example in Leeds ibid., pp. 230-233 and Aberdeen pp. 90-93 (taking place in December and January 1832 respectively); Passing of the Bill p. 192.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 178.

Though this man had once been fairly high up in society, the fall was even easier for those who were themselves nearer to the very lowest ranks, and this included the artisans. Essentially though there were three categories of worker – the skilled worker (mechanic or artisan), the operative (semi-skilled factory worker) and the labouring population (unskilled sometimes called the poor), J. F. C. Harrison (1961) notes how the new industrial society blurred the boundaries between these distinctions.<sup>117</sup> This was because “...successive visitations of unemployment and epidemic disease exercised a levelling effect on the working class as a whole”.<sup>118</sup>

Figure 5.8 Anatomy Act Protest in Leeds 1832.

In Leeds the centre of woollen manufacture, where Edward Baines Senior was M. P. (1835 Select Committee member), there had been successive bouts of economic depression, one of which was in 1831 shortly before the Anatomy Act was passed. Mass unemployment inevitably caused a dramatic loss of earnings and meant that a huge amount of families were in poverty.<sup>119</sup> It is perhaps unsurprising then that Leeds should host one of the biggest demonstrations against the Anatomy Act during the election period of 1832 (see Figure 5.8).<sup>120</sup>

Paisley, another textiles dominated town was also in a similar economic situation in 1832. Richardson describes the conditions based on an official report of the

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<sup>117</sup> Harrison *Learning and Living 1790-1960* 1961, pp. 6-7.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 14-15.

<sup>120</sup> Richardson *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* 1989, pp. 230-233.



situation: “‘Vast numbers’ of poor people ‘had the greater part of their bed and body clothes lying in pawn’, and whole families were sleeping on straw or bare floors with only half a blanket between them.”<sup>121</sup> James Skene during the Select Committee confirmed this situation when he described how the Paisley shawl trade had been affected by “considerable failures” which he attributed to the influx of French shawls.<sup>122</sup> Similarly Samuel Smith (from the firm Harding, Smith and Co. on Pall Mall) noted that “[t]he Scotch shawl trade has been very much injured by the introduction of the French shawls within the last few years...”.<sup>123</sup> But from these comments we simply hear the economic viewpoint.

On a human level, the widespread poverty had led in the year 1832 to an outbreak of cholera in Paisley, and the already horrific situation was compounded by the fear of the poor that their dead would be used for dissections. When it was discovered that there were indeed bodies missing amongst those recently buried, crowds went on the rampage through Paisley demanding respect and justice.<sup>124</sup> Six weavers were appointed by the mob to inspect the other coffins, and it was discovered that three bodies had been snatched. But the action of the crowd and the damage done to the buildings of the town created a backlash from those in authority. Richardson notes that “[t]wo days after the riot, the medical men of Paisley collectively resigned from all public duties. At the same time, the poor were refused parish coffins or the use of the parish hearse for their dead”.<sup>125</sup> This resulted in many families having to carry the bodies of their dead through the streets to the distant place of burial, where a guard had been set up to prevent grave robbing. Furthermore, the pitiful situation was compounded by the fact that the wealthy could still bury their cholera dead in the centre of town.<sup>126</sup> Thus it appeared that no one considered that the fears of the poor and their claims to the dignity of their dead were in any way justifiable.

The situation in Leeds and Paisley and the Anatomy Act seem a world away from the enraptured audience of mechanics watching the dissection of a human

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<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>122</sup> SC35 q. 1121, p. 80.

<sup>123</sup> SC35 q. 292, p. 22.

<sup>124</sup> *Op cit.*, pp. 223-224.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

body at the Mechanics' Institute in London, but actually it was not. Most dissectionists including Charles Bell and Joseph Carpue had had to procure corpses for their study by illegal means. Both of them had gained their subjects through the activities of the bodysnatcher Joshua Naples.<sup>127</sup> For the dissectionists the release from this trade by the Act in 1832 was due in particular to Henry Warburton who had championed the Bill and constructed the Select Committee Report.<sup>128</sup> Warburton was the campaign secretary for Joseph Hume, both of whom were on the Select Committee of 1835, while Hume was a member of the Society for Promoting Practical Design;<sup>129</sup> furthermore, both of these members were 'first order' Benthamites.<sup>130</sup> The circumstances of this connection to both the Select Committee and to the later Society, does suggest that some reconsideration of the choice of curriculum should be made.

Whether the Leicester Square school actually had dissections available for the students is perhaps rather unlikely, although as we are aware anatomical instruction was a key component and the students may have studied from life models in combination with an *écorché* as was more common. But it is clear that at another educational establishment at which Hume and Warburton were shareholders - the University of London - dissection was definitely part of the curriculum, probably for medical students.<sup>131</sup> The profit made by the sale of corpses to students after 1832 prompted some critics to suggest that Hume and Warburton had promoted changes in the Anatomy Act purely for personal profit.<sup>132</sup> However in addition to economic gain and as regards the teaching of design, I would also suggest that the offering of anatomical study at these Benthamite institutions represented an ideological shift in the perception of the

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>128</sup> The dissectionist and surgeon Southwood Smith thanked Warburton on behalf of the profession over the passage of the Act (Smith *A Lecture Delivered over the Remains of Jeremy Bentham* 1832, p. 72).

<sup>129</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 74. Indeed Hume may have initiated the action. According to a printed announcement attached to Haydon's diary, dated 29 May 1837, there was to be a public meeting lead by Joseph Hume concerning the opening of national monuments and collections to the public. If the Select Committee was typical of this type of debate, then schools of design will have been discussed (Haydon *The Diary of Benjamin Robert Haydon* 1963, p. 416).

<sup>130</sup> Finer "The Transmission of Benthamite Ideas, 1820-50" in *Nineteenth-Century Studies of Government* 1972, p. 11-32.

<sup>131</sup> Richardson *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* 1989, pp. 248-249.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.



human body, one that moved the emphasis away from the qualities of the body as Neoplatonic source for the mysteries of the universe, and towards the model of the body as a symbol of 'natural' order in both human society and the natural world. Though these two approaches seem almost identical which is hardly surprising given that the theories come from the same source, the difference lies in the status that the two sets of knowledge imbue the student with. As we have seen in Chapter 4, the knowledge of how to reproduce the human body in the tradition of Neoplatonism bestowed on the artist the status of a god-maker. In opposition to this however, the latter Benthamite model gave the student only a sense of obedience, as one would hope an accepting servant to a larger system. The inherent sense of servitude contained in this type of education surrounding the human body, was championed by Jeremy Bentham himself at the time of the Anatomy Act.

## The dissection of Jeremy Bentham

Figure 5.9 Jeremy Bentham's body awaiting dissection, drawing by H. H. Pickersgill 1832.

Jeremy Bentham died on June 6 1832 and his body was taken to the Webb Street anatomy theatre to be dissected three days later.<sup>133</sup> The dissection of Bentham's body was being carried out on his instructions and in front of his students, two of whom were George Grote and John Bowring, members of the 1835 and 1835-6 Select Committee respectively.<sup>134</sup> Over his remains the doctor Southwood Smith

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<sup>133</sup> Smith *A Lecture delivered over the Remains of Jeremy Bentham* 1832, p. 41.

<sup>134</sup> Op cit., p. 161 and Bartle *An Old Radical and His Brood* 1994, p. 36.

delivered a lecture before dissecting his friend's body. This lecture was an outline of the philosopher's life and work, one aspect of which was the support and example that Bentham set for his followers (even in death) by desiring to be dissected, a practice that as we have seen challenged the understood social and religious norms of the period. Smith extolled the virtue of this decision and used the opportunity to refute many common theories that had been used against dissection and the Anatomy Act in particular.<sup>135</sup> But of more interest in the lecture in relation to design, is the way that the surgeon, presumably under the instructions of Bentham himself used the opportunity of the dissection to simultaneously outline and classify the philosopher's theories in detail. During this discussion what is fascinating is the way that Smith utilises the sight of the body of Bentham (see figure 5.9) as a symbol for the more abstract principles of Benthamism. In this way, the human body (in this case Bentham's) was used as a tool by which to instruct and remind the listening scholars and politicians of the truth upon which the philosopher's theories were apparently based.<sup>136</sup> Smith commented:

By this act, he carries by his own personal example, to the utmost extent to which it is possible for a human being to carry his example, the great practical principle for the development and application of which he has raised to himself an immortal name.

It is this employment of the human form that was, I suggest at the heart of Benthamite design.

Of initial note in Southwood Smith's speech is the declaration that a human being was merely one of the "...sentient creatures" on the earth and was party to the same laws, this being the seeking of individual happiness.<sup>137</sup> The status of the human being was therefore levelled to that of other feeling animals in Smith's speech, which in a sense was echoed in the comment by the Earl of Radnor to William Cobbett when he stated that dissection made no "...distinction between

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<sup>135</sup> Op cit., pp. 66-69.

<sup>136</sup> Smith links Bentham's concepts of social design to Newtonian physical laws implying the same status of truth about the world (Smith *A Lecture delivered over the Remains of Jeremy Bentham* 1832, pp. 9-11).

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-8.



the future state of human beings, and that of brutes”.<sup>138</sup> Smith’s initial introduction must have made a powerful impression on those viewing Bentham’s dead body lying on the surgeon’s table waiting to be dissected. As William Roberts (1843) noted, a dissection was a profoundly disruptive action to the body, usually resulting in “...little else...than an assemblage of disconnected bones” and as such was a violent destruction of individual identity.<sup>139</sup> Immediately then the body of Bentham became a symbol of the physicality of the human form, lacking mystical or religious resonance (though later through his ‘resurrection’ Bentham eventually regained this mystical significance).

The body of Bentham was also used as a symbol to demonstrate the centrality of the happiness principle that Smith described thus: “Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, Pain and Pleasure: these two masters govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think”.<sup>140</sup> Thus happiness was explained by Smith in relation to bodily health, which he considered to be the basis of all other types of happiness, and the treatment of disease was therefore central to the achievement of this ultimate goal.<sup>141</sup> For Smith the importance of dissection for providing the knowledge required for the guardianship of health was immeasurable, and the surgeon argued that Bentham “...knew that the basis of medicine is anatomy, and that the only means of acquiring a knowledge of anatomy is through dissection”.<sup>142</sup> Thus Bentham’s body was both a means and a symbol of the principle that health equalled happiness.

Furthermore, in Smith’s notion of pain and pleasure lay the substitution of these terms for evil and good respectively,<sup>143</sup> reversing the more traditional and religious notion of dutiful penance and therefore goodness in relation to pain. Smith claimed that alternatively for Bentham “...happiness and duty are

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<sup>138</sup> Radnor *Letter from the Earl of Radnor* 1832, pages not numbered.

<sup>139</sup> “...[W]hat with sloughing away, and what with being hacked and cut to pieces, there is scarcely a solitary instance where the identity of the body could be proved...” (Roberts *Mr. Warburton’s Anatomy Bill* 1843, pp. 8-9).

<sup>140</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

identical”.<sup>144</sup> Thus in the surgeon’s lecture goodness had become detached from religious meaning and anchored to the healthy physicality of the body, as D. L. LeMahieu (1976) described it “...virtue had been cast adrift from the shorings of theology”.<sup>145</sup> Bentham’s body was therefore also a symbol for goodness and this was particularly emphasised by Southwood Smith. Though the philosopher was eighty-five years old when he died explained the surgeon, medically he had the body of a sixty year old. This attested to the “...fact, that severe and constant mental labour is not incompatible with health and longevity, but conducive to both, provided the mind be unanxious and the habits temperate”.<sup>146</sup> Here there is an equation between goodness, Benthamism and the health of the body.

But perhaps the most profound and important use of the body of Bentham is Smith’s discussion of the intricacies of the human body’s structure. The surgeon explained:

...all the actions of the living body are carried on by the instrumentality of organs. Organs are living agents, whose action constitutes function. These organs, for the most part, are concealed from view. Life depends on their integrity; their structure is complex and delicate: whence they are enclosed in cavities, placed under the shelter of bones, protected entirely concealed from sight. The brain and spinal cord, the central masses of the nervous system, are contained in the bony cavities of the skull and the spinal columns. The lungs and the heart are enclosed in the chest, the stomach, the intestines, the liver, the spleen, are contained in the abdomen. The coverings which protect these important organs from external violence, necessarily place them beyond our sight: their situation, their relations, their actions, cannot probably be known unless the dead body be opened and examined.

But it is not the superficial inspection of these organs that will enable us to understand their functions; it is often indispensable to discover their intimate structure. Not merely dissection, therefore, but minute and delicate dissection, is, in many cases, requisite.

No one now disputes that the dissection of the human body, to such an extent as is necessary to afford an intimate acquaintance with its structure, and with the mutual relations of all its parts, is indispensable to the surgeon and physician.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., pp. 32-33.

<sup>145</sup> LeMahieu *The Mind of William Paley* 1976, p. 137.

<sup>146</sup> Op cit., pp. 56-57.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., pp. 64-65.



I have quoted this part of Smith's lecture at length because it provides a striking description of the way in which the anatomist experienced the human form, and this I suggest has metaphorical connections to both the view of the factory in Ure's *Philosophy of Manufactures* and the more general Benthamite vision of society.

In Smith's description there is a clear sense of the observation of the complex and minute details and uses of each of the components of the human body while simultaneously there is an appreciation of the connections and relationships between these parts. The language and viewpoint contained in Smith's speech echoes Ure's words in attempting to describe the factory system to his reader. He explained that it was like:

[s]ome complex mechanisms, indeed, like the topography of an irregular city, [that] are most readily comprehended by inspection of a plan, in which the mutual bearings and connexions of the parts are analytically shown.<sup>148</sup>

The similarity of these two viewpoints, one of the factory and one of the human body is not coincidental. As has been noted in Chapter 1 the mechanistic and organic were aligned through the theory of natural theology, particularly that of William Paley, and a brief consideration of this has interesting implications when considering the symbolism of Bentham's body.

Paley had drawn an analogy between the natural world and the newly developing industrialised process with its mechanistic synchronicity between mills and individual machines, orchestrated to create a finished product. In the same way Paley considered that the natural world could also be thought of as a mechanism, which was intended to induce as its finished object the happiness of humanity.<sup>149</sup> Thus as manufacturers were the planners of the mechanised industrial process, so

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<sup>148</sup> Ure *The Philosophy of Manufactures* 1967, p. 44.

<sup>149</sup> LeMahieu *The Mind of William Paley* 1976, p. 162.

God was the designer of the natural world.<sup>150</sup> For Paley the keystone of this analogy was the human body.<sup>151</sup>

Paley claimed that there was no better way of introducing such a huge subject as that of God's creation of the world, than to look at a single example - the human eye. He related the eye to a telescope because of the way that both 'devices' responded to the laws of light refraction.<sup>152</sup> However Paley noted that "I speak not of the origin of the laws themselves; but such laws being fixed, the construction in both cases is adapted to them".<sup>153</sup> This was a crucial point because here we see the core of Paley's theories - the centrality of the idea of fitness for purpose. For the theologian it was the appropriateness of the object in relation to its function that provided the evidence that there was a designer of nature, i.e. God. But what is particularly interesting is that the evidence of the designer is based on the idea that the 'laws' of existence are 'fixed'. Thus design even for God, who one must presume was the author of the 'laws' in the first place, was centred on responding to a pre-existing set of circumstances. These circumstances were therefore a body of laws that were fixed and as such truthful that in effect no single entity had authored.

There are several ways in which Paley's theories are relevant to the dissection of Bentham. On a basic level, the widespread knowledge of Paley's theories and of natural theology generally, would have meant that the audience at Bentham's dissection would have been used to considering the human body as an example of more general principles that appeared to exist in the world. Roger Cooter (1979) notes that the metaphor of the body became particularly widespread and was at the core of social theory in the nineteenth-century.<sup>154</sup> Smith was therefore using a common metaphor during the lecture, though he was employing it in a very specific way.

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<sup>150</sup> Gillespie "Divine Design and the Industrial Revolution" 1990, p. 217.

<sup>151</sup> Op cit., p. 61.

<sup>152</sup> Paley was literally claiming the mechanical status of both objects (Op cit., p. 223).

<sup>153</sup> Paley *Paley's Natural Theology* 1836, p. 22.

<sup>154</sup> Cooter "The Power of the Body" in *Natural Order* 1979, p. 73.



In essence Bentham's body was used to symbolise the philosopher's own practice. Just as the human body was 'designed' by God based around the fixed laws that existed independently in the world, so Bentham had seen the underlying laws of the world and redesigned the social constitution of the law making it fit for its purpose, as opposed to the old system.<sup>155</sup> Importantly then these were not laws that were constructed by Bentham's imagination or invention but were, according to Smith, codes that he had created in response to the structure of human society.<sup>156</sup> As such, like the factory and the natural world, Bentham's planned component parts were designed to work seamlessly together in order to produce the finished product of happiness for the greatest number of people.<sup>157</sup> Happiness, for Smith was synonymous with a healthy life, again symbolised by Bentham's body, bringing the three-way analogy full-circle.

By presenting the body of Bentham in this way, the Benthamite audience was also provided with the first example of the way that other bodies could be used to teach about the apparently 'natural' and unauthored structure of society. For those who were watching the dissections, the exploration of a body in which its connections and parts were studied alongside the effects of injury<sup>158</sup> or disease, could provide a method of actively seeing the Benthamite system at work. This was literally the case if one reconsiders the Factory Inspectors' instructions briefly outlined in the introduction to this thesis. In these questions lay the in-depth investigation into the physical health of the workers. An Inspector would make a note of whether the worker was healthy, unhealthy and if so what disorder, whether s/he was maimed and how, whether s/he was 'distorted' and how, as well as how much working time they lost through sickness.<sup>159</sup> Married women were asked about their pregnancy and how many miscarriages they had had and how many difficult births.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Smith *A Lecture delivered over the Remains of Jeremy Bentham* 1832, p. 22; see also pp. 18-19.

<sup>156</sup> Smith *A Lecture delivered over the Remains of Jeremy Bentham* 1832, p. 18.

<sup>157</sup> These were the constitutional, civil, penal and administrative spheres (Ibid., p. 22).

<sup>158</sup> William Roberts (1843) notes the importance of anatomy in a country such as Britain "...where manufactures, mining operations, and the use of machinery, dangerous to life and limb" requires additional medical knowledge (*Mr. Warburton's Anatomy Bill* 1843, p. 5).

<sup>159</sup> *Instructions from the Central Board of Factory Commissioners* 1833, p. 35.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

Thus in the collated results achieved by this favoured Benthamite policy the collective body was a visible indication of choices that a subject had made between pain and pleasure. Therefore by implication it was not just Bentham's body that could be used as a symbol, but any human form. The physical body had become a tool by which to teach the right way of behaving in society. In addition any human body could also symbolise the logical structure that society should have, showing as it did a lesson in the division of working parts, their connections and the importance of fitness for purpose. Clearly this was a lesson particularly aimed at the working class who through the mechanism of the Anatomy Act would be learning by example from the bodies of those people in society who had not proved to be successful components in its overall scheme, according to Burnet's Spiral of Success. It is this model of anatomical study that I suggest was the Benthamite model of design, one that demanded discipline and obedience to what it considered was the true laws of society – economic health and happiness.

In this chapter the transformation of the Neoplatonic model of the body into the Benthamite template for social duty through the medium of the human form, has been outlined. Yet there are similarities between the Neoplatonic sense of the body and the dissected Benthamite form. Both equally signalled an analogical relationship to the social world, both inspired the viewer to embody its theories, yet the model favoured by the Philosophical Radicals did not imbue the viewer with a sense of power, rather it urged the acceptance of an authority that remained separate and distant from any individual. This was the power of an autonomous system in opposition to the ability of the Neoplatonist to become divine, i.e. to imbibe the creative power of universe and deity.



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# Conclusion

This thesis has explored the debate contained within the proceedings of the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures of 1835-6. Apart from the work of Mervyn Romans (1998)<sup>1</sup> on taste, economics and consumption, these inquiry discussions have not been examined in detail previously. This is because, though many writers highlight the Select Committee as the beginning of later developments in art education in particular, they have generally considered that the debates themselves are not worthy of a close investigation. There are several reasons for this but the criticisms of the debate rely mainly on the idea that the questioning was undirected and confused, an assessment deriving from the assumption that the Committee was established in order to found a single Government School of Design. As such the debate, which covers a wide range of topics seems particularly redundant.

Dismissal of the inquiry has also been based on an assessment of some of the members and witnesses on the Select Committee, in particular the painter Benjamin Robert Haydon, who was intimately connected with the cause of art education in Britain. He notoriously had a vendetta against the Royal Academy, and in particular the President Sir Martin Archer Shee.<sup>2</sup> The policy of the Radicals, who made up the majority of the Committee personnel especially in the second session of the inquiry that took place in 1836, has similarly been caricatured and interpreted as the group simply being *against* the Royal Academy. However, in both Mervyn Romans' work and the present thesis these criticisms have been critiqued. There are several ways in which this has been done.

The Committee debates can be detached from the establishment of the Government Normal School of Design, firstly because of timing. The decision to

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<sup>1</sup> This is both in his PhD thesis (1998) 'Political, economic, social and cultural determinants in the history of early to mid-nineteenth century art and design education in Britain' PhD thesis. University of Central England, and his essay (1998) "Politics, Economics and Art Education; Problematising a Nineteenth Century Panacea" in SWIFT, J. (ed.) *Art Education Discourses: Vol. 1 Root & Stem*. Birmingham: ARTicle Press & University of Central England.

<sup>2</sup> Shee "Haydon versus Shee" 1959, pp. 347-58.



establish a school of design had been made with the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge already having been approached by Government in 1834. This involved some of the personnel who were eventually on the Council of the Normal School of Design. Secondly, the inquiry discussion can also be separated from the establishment of the Government school by its aims. When one considers the actual aims of the Committee as they were put forward in the title of the inquiry, then it is clear that the concern of the investigation was not simply about a design education provided by a school. Rather the Committee was established to inquire into 'the best *means* of extending a knowledge of the Arts and the Principle of Design among the People'. This acknowledgment has made the apparent confusion of the debate more understandable and when the inquiry is read in the light of this, the diversity of discussion appears far more coherent.

A consideration of the variety of the debate has therefore also demanded that the political context of the Committee is taken into account and the question of the Radicals' role is raised. As has been noted before, their activities had been rather caricatured but after one takes into account the aims of the inquiry, there appears to be connections between the political theories of the Philosophical Radicals and the Committee's structure. The Benthamite approach has been defined as one in which the apparatus of social institutions were targeted, the aim being to orchestrate them so that they worked more efficiently according to the laws of economics. On this subject, it is interesting to hear phrases like a "...free trade in art"<sup>3</sup> or a "...kind of republic of the arts"<sup>4</sup> during the Select Committee debates, because they do infer an awareness among the witnesses of the interchange between trading terms (and particularly the Benthamite policy on trade) and the Select Committee themes.

This is not to say that the underlying argument behind the existence of the Select Committee was economic. On this subject, Romans has made very clear arguments against an economic explanation for the proposal of the Select Committee. Rather what I am referring to is an ideological economics – this is economic law as an autonomous dynamism, a force that shapes the form of

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas Hofland SC36 q. 1269, pp. 106-107.

<sup>4</sup> John Pye SC36 q. 1345, p. 116.

society with an energy akin to natural growth. In this way the Benthamite strategy, which I suggest the Select Committee forms part of is an idealistic debate concerning alternating and opposing visions of a future society. In this thesis therefore, the debate has been considered as an essential stage in the development of actualized theories of design, as well as policies implemented in design education in Britain.

Because of this reevaluation of the Select Committee debates, the approach taken towards an analysis of them in this thesis has been to combine the methods of previous scholarship. This has been to consider the debate as a discernable event as it has been treated in previous studies of design education history, but combining this broader picture with the details of the discussion as it has been generally treated by design and cultural historians. In order to bridge these two perspectives the method has therefore demanded that a central concept, important to both Benthamite policy and artistic theory, has been considered. This has been the concept 'design', the definition of which has been seen in its broadest sense.

Design has been defined as a difficult term, one that has meanings that are different that that also exhibit an analogical relationship to each other. An architectural plan, a pattern, a religious scheme, a painting or an intention, seem entirely separate but from a certain perspective they can be understood to refer to the same concept – this is the space between theory and practice. The thesis has therefore aimed to draw out the threads of the definition of design from within the Select Committee proceedings, and explore its complexity in relation to the formation of a design practice. As such the mutli-layered quality of 'design' has been analysed in order to draw out a tacit understanding of the concept by the Benthamites. This understanding was considered not necessarily to have been overtly or consciously realized by the group in relation to manufacturing design practice. Yet it is proposed that this tacit understanding has had a powerful, if implicit legacy. This is particularly in relation to the design principles which were tentatively drawn out in the Select Committee Report.

The Benthamite understanding of design has been explored by 'unpacking' the concept of design in differing ways beginning by situating the debate within the



broader context of the Enlightenment and the changes in social order that it engendered. This discussion focused on the traditional ideas of polite and useful knowledge in which the acquisition of different sets of knowledge was associated with differing strata in society. This was considered in the oscillation that occurred between the two models where at times there seemed to be no difference in those whose legacy derived from either a polite or useful background, yet at other times a dividing line was actively drawn in the face of possible challenges to social hierarchy. The reason for this fluctuating sense of order and authority has been identified as the question of whose role it was to govern or even consider society. For the Benthamites, this viewpoint was essential to their political practice, but there were other members of society that considered themselves to be more appropriate governors. This was a governorship based on heritage, derived either from landowning or religious sources, rather than one based on professional political practice. Though this seems to be part of a very different debate from that of design for manufactures, it has been proposed that within this Parliamentary inquiry, this larger argument was being played out – i.e. whose role was it to design human society, and by which method?

In beginning to explore this forum of debate, the details of the Select Committee discussions have initially been outlined. This has revealed the logic of the Committee inquiry, which has in contrast often been considered previously as confused and undirected. However the discussions have been categorised around four major arenas thought to diffuse a knowledge of design to the population - these were museums, schools of design, copyright and publications. From an analysis of these discussions in the inquiry, a series of themes was extracted that it was felt reverberated with the deeper analysis of other forms of design debate present within the proceedings. These were particularly a sense of the mystical qualities of art and the beneficial moral effects on seeing it, as well as a search for originality and invention. Both of these questions have been shown to be pertinent to the formation of 'design' as a concept within the inquiry. Furthermore, the issues of originality and invention have also indicated that when considering the ideal curriculum for teaching design for manufactures, the legacy has not simply been drawn from fine art. Rather discussion has included other

approaches such as that of science. Science and art have been shown to traditionally demand different approaches towards the role of the individual in invention, and these questions are central to the development of Benthamite design.

In order to continue the excavation of the concept of design, the thesis has examined examples of superior design highlighted by the Select Committee members and witnesses, and has analysed them, abstracting principles in order to produce a set of criteria. Principles were particularly important to the Select Committee members and witnesses because they could be transmitted to a population, learned and imbibed, transforming what appeared at times to be a drunken and unruly lower class – a class that threatened to upset the established hierarchy. Through the principles of colour, form, outline, workmanship, botanical accuracy, archaeological study, perspective and narrative or *istoria*, a model of ideal design for this group of members and witnesses on the Select Committee of 1835-6 has been defined for the first time. But the outlining of criteria for design practice produced an apparent contradiction within the conclusions of the inquiry whereby the desire for a seemingly formulaic set of guidelines appears to be at odds with the recommendation made in the Select Committee Report for an individualised and traditionally fine art based studio education. This conundrum has demanded that there is a reevaluation of the nature of a ‘principle’ and a further and more complex consideration of design practice has been developed in response. This draws on the concept of *istoria*, the cause behind the appearance of a painting and is explored through a ninth principle – the category of anatomical study.

Anatomical accuracy has been identified as an important, indeed a central issue for the Select Committee of 1835-6. To study from the human body was not simply an act of empiricism but was a traditional and very powerful method that drew on the Humanist theories of the Renaissance. This demanded an understanding of the human body as the measure of the harmony of the universe in which the individual was empowered to become a creator akin to God. These theories were particularly popular in relation to artists who understood the representation of the human form to initiate the *istoria* within a painting, i.e. the



cause of the scene. Through this it was considered that they were able to breathe life into their work in the way that a deity would undertake the act of creation. In the examples of superior design presented in the Select Committee it was these qualities that for the witnesses marked out certain designers, particularly John Flaxman, whose 'Shield of Achilles' was seen as wholly original for the period and contained all the qualities of god-like production.

But the question has been asked in the present thesis whether this was the type of design that would have been favoured by the Benthamites. The curriculum at the design school of the Society for Promoting Practical Design (a group that was connected to the Radicals) has been initially examined and here it has been found that a study of the human form, taught by the dissectionist Joseph Carpue, was included in this short-lived institution. Did this provision therefore infer that the Radicals envisaged their students as empowered Neoplatonic artists whilst also hoping that they would become a cog in factory machines? It has been suggested that this model of a designer was not consistent with the Benthamite philosophy and so an alternative approach to a study of the human body has been proposed, one that fits more comfortably with the Radicals' notions of social harmony.

This was a model that was closely linked to Neoplatonism because the Radical model used the vocabulary of Humanist theory in which the body was the measure of all things. But the body was not a measure of the greater mysteries and divine power of the universe, but rather of the naturalism of the Benthamite view of society. This was achieved by the combination of two events, the passage of the Anatomy Act in 1832 and the dissection of Jeremy Bentham himself, which took place in the same year. In both these instances the body was shown to be nothing more than the body itself, yet also in its connections and structures, and its display of health or disease, it simultaneously became a symbol of Benthamite social policy, i.e. the orchestration of societal institutions and the goal of the happiness of the greatest number. Though this was equally a view of a broader society, like the Humanist model of the body as measure of the universe, the viewpoint did not empower the viewer. Rather the viewer merely saw themselves as part of a system, servant to it in the same way that Bentham

himself showed that he was subject to the same rules of life and death as his followers.

The act of creativity visible in the study or representation of the body was not conceived to be that which derived from the individual imbued with divine power. This model was not of an artist able to produce an *istoria* that would move the very soul of the viewer, and it did not rely on the constant re-enactment of the source of the universe or societal authority. Rather it was an alternative stance on the representation of the body in which the artist was the viewer whose creativity like the Neoplatonic artist, derived from the power of a universal system, but who was bestowed only with servitude and whose identity lay outside the system from which the creative act had come from, and to which it was bound. This did not rely on reflective activity but proactive action where choices were derived from a set of fixed rules that demanded a fitness for purpose. Perhaps this difference was epitomised by an entry in the diary of Benjamin Robert Haydon, which he wrote after a meeting with William Ewart in 1838. He described Ewart, writing “This is a Radical. All they want is *movement*”.<sup>5</sup> Therefore an artist or designer moulded through Radicalism was dealing with a more scientific idea of the world, one in which the natural and true principles governed the actions of the individual who responded to what Paley claimed were its fundamental and ‘fixed laws’. Thus the defined principles were conceived to be the truth or fixed laws of designing, a concept of design practice that was to develop under the heading of Modernism.

This investigation into the Benthamite relationship to the Select Committee discussions has opened up many areas for further research. In considering the discussions within the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, taking place before the Select Committee in 1834, it seems that more research should be done on this earlier period, in particular the links between the 1832 investigation of the Silk Industry. From the research that has been done for the present thesis, there are hints that a further study of this 1832 Committee would prove fruitful in considering the formation of members and witnesses in the later inquiry.

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<sup>5</sup> Haydon *The Diary of Benjamin Robert Haydon* 1963 Vol. 4, p. 485 (June 1).



The network of members or witnesses who were involved in the inquiry would also provide a fascinating area for further research, in particular the connections that could be made between the Select Committee and the establishment of regional institutions for exhibition, more broader design management, or schools of design. Many of the members, even after the basic research undertaken in each, suggest paths into useful areas where 'regional' and often historically marginalised figures could be more generally incorporated and/or acknowledged as active agents within more mainstream design history. Such a study could begin with any of the members, for instance the work of Joseph Brotherton in Salford, Philip Barnes in Norwich or Joshua Scholefield and his son William in Birmingham.

The Society for Promoting Practical Design, though short-lived also offers an enticing way forward, and further investigation of that brief organization would prove useful. This is particularly so, as the only hints of it within Haydon's diaries seem to suggest that the Society's concerns were with more issues than design schools, and extended to the consideration of collections and the provision of monuments.<sup>6</sup> This concern with a range of mechanisms, as well as the personnel including Joseph Hume, William Ewart, Philip Barnes, Thomas Wyse and Haydon - all of whom were on the original Select Committee, does indicate that the Benthamite viewpoint was being continued by this Society which may in turn have lead to further organisations. The Benthamite legacy is also particularly pertinent when one considers the overwhelming influence of Henry Cole who had close connections to the Benthamites. Scholars of Cole must surely consider this early history and the influence of Benthamism on his views of education and the management of design. Of interest also would be the relationship between design for manufactures, what became industrial design as a point of synthesis between science and art. The complexity of the varying approaches of these disciplines in terms of design methodology would appear to emerge in some ways from the Utilitarian approach to societal design.

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<sup>6</sup> Haydon *The Diaries of Benjamin Robert Haydon* 1963, p. 464 (May 29).

The relationship between science and art in the way that it has derived from the Select Committee in this analysis will also contribute to broader research surrounding the development of design for manufactures and the evolution of design education theory. It is within this sense of an autonomous dynamism that is beyond the individual creativity of an artist, but which can be viewed and debated, that I suggest the major contribution of the current analysis is provided. Clearly here in the discussions of the 1835-6 Select Committee and in the challenge to notions of traditional and empowering forms of creativity, lay the traces of transformations in biological theory through the emergence of the principle of evolution (an authorless dynamism in the universe) and the beginnings of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century modernism.

As Barbara Whitney Keyser (1998) has explained, there emerged within the later nineteenth-century a theory of 'eumorphics' or 'euchromics', which was the abstraction of beauty from form through the understanding of an organic sense of dynamism.<sup>7</sup> This she identifies as underlying the development of botanical ornament in which the crystalline view of the natural world formed the basis to a growing interest in a geometry that sought to reflect the underlying scientific structure of the world.<sup>8</sup> If one considers the work of the next Superintendent of the Government School of Design, William Dyce, who took over the role after the removal of John B. Papworth, then it is clear that this new geometrical basis for the representation of nature was favoured.

In his *Drawing Book of the Government School of Design, or Dyce's Outlines*, Dyce provided a series of exercises for the budding designer, beginning with geometric drawings.<sup>9</sup> These echo the emphasis placed on geometry as the fundamental language underlying the surface of appearances, similar to that expounded by Thomas Sheraton in 1793 and Reinagle during the Select Committee. But rather than relating the geometry to Classical style, Dyce understood these geometrical systems to be based on "...the great example of

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<sup>7</sup> Keyser "Ornament as Idea" 1998, p. 127.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>9</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p. 231.



Nature herself".<sup>10</sup> In setting aside the emphasis on the Classical as a corner-stone of geometrical study, Dyce was creating a system that did not call on the Humanist tradition of the body as the basis for all artistic understanding.<sup>11</sup> More importantly, this was a method that Dyce believed tapped into some scientific notion of beauty, a truth by which beauty as a principle was "...separable from natural objects".<sup>12</sup> Again this inferred a sense of the unauthored dynamism that created the natural world beyond any perceivable phenomena or individual.

As if to emphasize the science of beauty, the Government School of Design worked very closely with botanists such as John Lindley<sup>13</sup> and Christopher Dresser who had been a student of the institution himself.<sup>14</sup> In 1857, Dresser became the Lecturer on Artistic Botany in the Department of Science and Art, and published eleven articles in the *Art-Journal* during the next year. These were to contribute in part to his famous texts on botany published in 1859, *The Rudiments of Botany* and *Unity of Variety*.<sup>15</sup> Stuart Durant (1993) notes that Dresser had inherited his approach to botany from his education at the Government School of Design and was in this way reaffirming the place of botanical study within its curriculum. Dresser had studied under the Lecturer of Botany and Flower Painting at the time, Richard Redgrave, another educator concerned with the geometrical stylization of plants.<sup>16</sup> However, Durant also identifies the main criticism that Dresser made of the teaching he had received in the London institution; this was the lack of emphasis on practical application.

It is clear that, as was recommended in the Select Committee Report, there was a desire that a school of design should be practical. Dyce also believed, after studying institutions abroad, that the need for the practical application of design theory was extremely important and had contributed to the success of the French system in particular.<sup>17</sup> Similarly Richard Redgrave had designed a multi-staged

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<sup>10</sup> Dyce quoted in Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Frayling *The Royal College of Art* 1987, pp. 18-19.

<sup>12</sup> Brett "Drawing and the Ideology of Industrialization" in Doordan *Design History* 1995, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 13, n. 33.

<sup>14</sup> Durant *Christopher Dresser* 1993, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Frayling *The Royal College of Art* 1987, pp. 17-18.

curriculum for the School moving from drawing, painting and modeling to design.<sup>18</sup> Yet as Bell notes in relation to Redgrave's own design work,<sup>19</sup> much of the practicality of the School of Design was theoretical. Furthermore, not only was the teaching often only theoretical, but the design of the three-dimensional form of objects seemed to be more troublesome to teach than certain principles of drawing. In the text *Teaching Elementary Drawing* from 1852, J. C. Robinson (under Redgrave's supervision) identified ten stages of learning, but the emphasis in practice was usually placed on the first basic drawing stages.<sup>20</sup> With the exception of Dresser, Henry Cole's own work under the name Felix Summerly<sup>21</sup> and Cole's emphasis on the use of drawing as a tool for understanding form,<sup>22</sup> the application available within the School of Design during the next two decades after the Select Committee appeared to be better suited to shallow relief ornamental and pattern design. Furthermore, Cole himself also questioned the role of drawing principles that appeared to veer dangerously towards standardizing design practice.<sup>23</sup> Rather, Cole appeared to prefer principles that were "...minimalist and literalist" and in which designing practice should respond to "...the logic of use".<sup>24</sup>

This understanding of the construction of the form of objects in relation to their function seemed to rely for its theory more on engineers such as James Nasmyth, whose Select Committee evidence was extended in Robertson Buchanan's *Practical Essays on Mill Work and Other Machinery* from 1841. In this text, Nasmyth identified the same basic geometrical shapes as Dyce in particular, but related them to the functioning of machinery in opposition to the principles of ornament.<sup>25</sup> Thus, though ornament, surface pattern as well as three-dimensional design can all be seen to on the idea of an autonomous law - botanical growth betraying beauty in the abstract and the notion of a preexistent function to which the designer responds – the approach towards the legitimacy of those ideas, the

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<sup>18</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p. 232.

<sup>19</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 178.

<sup>20</sup> Op cit.

<sup>21</sup> See Chapter 3, figure 3.15.

<sup>22</sup> Bermingham *Learning to Draw* 2000, p. 232.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Brett "Drawing and the Ideology of Industrialization" in Doordan *Design History* 1995, p. 13.



individual role in relation to those concepts and the relationship between different design practices was not resolved, and perhaps is still not to some extent. Therefore the legacy of the dynamic sense of an autonomous society that had emerged through Baconian science and that was adopted by Benthamites political economy was extended, enhanced and fragmented in design practice. As such, future research may aim to connect these later complex debates on differing design processes with their common source; this being the transition of notions of authorship from individual divine inspiration to the servitude of a scholar responding to external and preexisting truths and laws. In this way the Select Committee inquiry may be understood as a conduit for exposing this transformation, rather than be disassociated from those future developments as has traditionally occurred.

Figure 0.2 Jeremy Bentham in University College London (the head is wax).

Finally, it is interesting to consider the icon of Jeremy Bentham. In a very real sense, this is still with us today because Jeremy Bentham's body is preserved according to his wishes in a 'cupboard' in the hallway of University College London (See Figure 0.2). Bentham did not favour icons but rather the existence of an object as the thing itself, and in this way Bentham aimed to be an 'auto-

icon' to inspire his followers.<sup>26</sup> This demanded his own body be present rather than his appearance in the form of a painting or statue. In effect then, Bentham did to some extent cheat on the laws of mortality that he seemed to have adhered to by undergoing a public dissection. His existence also takes the form of more than just his body. As Hanna Pitkin (1990) has noted:

Were Bentham to return today, he would surely be pleased at the extent of his triumph, the influence of his inventions, reforms, and vocabulary... he might find ours to be a Benthamite world: in its substituting of administration for politics, its oscillating between laissez-faire liberalism and the welfare state, its bureaucratization, the many large public and private organizations that manage, regulate and channel our lives. Indeed, some of Bentham's ideas have become our commonplace assumptions, to the point where one might say that Bentham has triumphed within each of us.<sup>27</sup>

In a sense then, like Bentham on his dissection table, his (partial) resurrection and the presence of his theories within our current systems of management demand that his legacy be more profoundly explored and considered. This is a concern that is also important to undertake for the administration of art, architecture, craft and design as it is naïve to consider that the philosophical mechanisms surrounding these disciplines are separate from larger political concerns. It is hoped that this thesis can be seen as helping to begin the reconstruction of the legacy of Philosophical Radicalism within the history of art and design theory.

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<sup>26</sup> Božovič "Introduction" in *The Panopticon Papers* 1995, p. 10.

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Lincoln City Archives	Letter 1833 2 Red 4/9/6/16. Lincoln and Lincolnshire Mechanics’ Institution 1833 T. D. E. H/2/4, TDE H1/119. Speech of E. L. Bulwer 1838 Hill 41/5/50.
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Royal Society Archives	Letters 1832 Lubbock Papers. Members List.
University College London Archive	Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge ‘Small Minutes Book’ and Committee Books 1831-34 SDUK 2, 7, 20; Rough Minutes SDUK 1834/5 17a.



## Select Committee Members

BAINES, Edward	1835 Committee	Reformer
BERNAL, Ralph	1835 Committee	Whig
BOWRING, John	1835-6 Committee	R. Reformer
BROCKELHURST, John	1835 Committee	Reformer
BROTHERTON, Joseph	1835-6 Committee	R. Reformer
BUCKINGHAM, James Silk	1835 Committee	Reformer
BULWER, Edward Lytton	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
BULWER, Henry Lytton	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
CLAY, William	1835 Committee	Reformer
COLBOURNE, N. W. R.	1835 Committee	Reformer
DAVENPORT, John	1835 Committee	Reformer
EGERTON, Lord Francis	1835 Committee	Tory
ELPHINSTONE, Howard	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
EVANS, George Hampden	1835 Committee	Whig
EWART, William	1835-6 Committee	R. Reformer
FITZMAURICE, W. T. P.	1835 Committee	Tory
GROTE, George	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
HAWES, Benjamin	1835 Committee	Reformer
HEATHCOTE, John	1835-6 Committee	Whig
HOPE, Henry Thomas	1835-6 Committee	Tory
HUME, Joseph	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
HUTT, William	1836 Committee	R. Reformer
INGLIS, Sir Robert	1835 Committee	Tory
JEPHSON, Charles D. O.	1835 Committee	Whig
LEWIS, David	1835-6 Committee	Tory
MACKENZIE, James A. S.	1835 Committee	Reformer
MORRISON, James	1835-6 Committee	Reformer
MURRAY, John A.	1835 Committee	Reformer
O'CONNELL, Daniel	1835 Committee	Repealer
OSWALD, James	1835 Committee	Reformer
PARKER, John	1836 Committee	Whig
PEEL, Sir Robert	1835 Committee	Tory
POTTER, Richard	1835 Committee	Whig/Radical
PUSEY, Philip	1836 Committee	Tory
RICE, Thomas Spring	1835 Committee	Whig
RIDLEY, Sir Matthew White	1835 Committee	Whig
ROEBUCK, Arthur	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
RUSSELL, Lord John	1835 Committee	Whig
SANDON, Lord Viscount	1835 Committee	Tory
SCHOLEFIELD, Joshua	1835-6 Committee	R. Reformer
SHEIL, Richard Lalor	1835 Committee	Reformer
STANHOPE, Philip Henry	1835 Committee	Tory
STEWART, Patrick Maxwell	1835 Committee	Reformer
STRUTT, Edward	1835-6 Committee	Reformer
THOMSON, Charles P.	1835 Committee	Reformer
TRACY, Charles Hanbury	1835 Committee	Whig
WARBURTON, Henry	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
WILKS, John	1835 Committee	Reformer
WILLIAMS, William	1835 Committee	R. Reformer
WYSE, Thomas	1835-6 Committee	Reformer?
YORKE, Eliot Thomas	1835 Committee	Tory

## Select Committee Witnesses

BARNES, Philip	24 August 1835
BARNES, Robert	24 August 1835
BOGÆRTS, Prof. Felix	28 August 1835
BOWRING, John	25 February 1836
BURNET, John	24 June 1836
BUTT, Robert	3 & 7 August 1835
CHEVERTON, Mr.	17 June 1836
CLINT, George	24 June 1836
COCKERELL, C. R.	28 Aug 1835 & 2 Aug. 1836
COWPER, Edward	17 June 1836
CRABB, James	19 August 1835
DONALDSON, T. L.	10 Mar & 1 July 1836
ELD, George	7 August 1835
FOGGO, George	10 Aug 1835 & 5 July 1836
GIBSON, Thomas Field	3 August 1835
GUILLOTE, Claude	14 August 1835
HARRISON, Robert	3 August 1835
HAY, David Ramsey	15 June 1836
HAYDON, B. R.	28 June & 26 July 1836
HENNING, John	17 August 1835
HILTON, William	26 July 1836
HOFLAND, T. C	1 July 1836
HOWARD, Henry	26 July 1836
HOWELL, John	3 August 1835
HOWELL, Thomas J.	1 March 1836
HURLESTONE, F. Y.	21 & 24 June 1836
JAMES, Thomas	3 August 1835
KLENZE, Baron L. von	13 August 1836
LANDSEER, John	19 July 1836
LEIGH, James M.	12 July 1836
MARTIN, John	17 August 1835 & 24 June 1836
MILLWARD, John	3 March 1836
MORANT, George J.	17 June 1836
MORRISON, James	30 July 1835
NASMYTH, James	8 March 1836
PAPWORTH, John B.	21 August 1835
PAUL, Sir John Dean	19 July 1836
PEEL, John	12 July 1836
PYE, John	5 & 26 July 1836
REINAGLE, Ramsey R.	17 June 1836
RENNIE, George	17 Aug 1835 & 21 June 1836
ROBERTSON, Joseph C.	2 September 1835
SASS, Henry	3 March 1836
SEGUIER, William	8 July 1836
SHEE, Sir Martin A.	15 July 1836
SKENE, James	21 August 1835
SMITH, Charles Harriot	10 August 1835
SMITH, John Jobson	27 July 1835
SMITH, Samuel	31 July 1835
SOLLY, Edward	12 July 1836
SPALDING, Benjamin	31 July 1835
STANLEY, George	8 July 1836
ST. LEON, Noel	10 March 1836
STOTHARD, Robert T.	8 March 1836
TOPLIS, Charles	31 Aug & 2 Sept. 1835
WAAGEN, Gustave F.	27 July, 3 & 7 Aug 1835
WILEY, Samuel	10 August 1835
WILKINS, William	1 & 8 July 1836
WOODBURN, Samuel	8 July 1836
WYON, William	4 September 1835

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ARTS AND  
MANUFACTURES OF 1835-6: ANATOMY, BENTHAMISM AND DESIGN**

**JANE ALEXANDRA WEBB BA, MA**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of  
Wolverhampton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Volume 2

June 2003

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# Appendices

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# Appendix 1

## Profiles of members and witnesses of the 1835-6 Select Committee

The information contained within this appendix is indicative of the general scope of members and witnesses' interests and backgrounds, and although not comprehensive will provide the reader with some sense of the personalities involved in the inquiry. The information may also prove useful as a starting point for future researchers who are interested in any of the personnel involved in the discussions, or who wish to follow the evolution of associations between particular people.

All information is dated to 1835-36 as far as possible and anything that was done after this date has not been included unless of specific relevance.

### Political terms from Dod's (1835) *The Parliamentary Pocket Companion*

**Conservatives** are gentlemen who take an opposite view of the Reform Bill from that entertained by its promoters.

**Radical Reformers.** Gentlemen who think the Reform Act falls as much too short of the necessary or expedient extension, as the Conservatives think it exceeds that boundary.

**Reformer.** This term is applied to all who have supported, or who approve of, the Reform Act, but think that its principle might with advantage be carried further.

**Repealers** are Irish Radical Reformers in favour of a repeal of the union, and advocates of all the measures enumerated in Mr. O'Connell's pledges...

**Whig** has been applied to gentlemen willing *generally* to give their confidence to such a ministry as that of Earl Grey or Viscount Melbourne.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dod *The Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 80. Information from this text will be followed by (D).



Those marked with a \* were also members on the 1836 phase of the Committee (unless otherwise noted, all other MPs only attended the 1835 phase).

## B

### Edward BAINES (Snr.)

**MP for:** Leeds Borough (Reformer)

**Occupation:** Editor and proprietor of the *Leeds Mercury* (WW)<sup>2</sup>

**Address (1):**

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Reform (WW)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** His son Edward Bains Jnr. wrote *The History of Cotton Manufacture* published in 1835. Involved in a survey instrumental in the Reform Act.<sup>3</sup>

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| BAINES, E. | (1851) <i>The Life of Edward Baines, late MP for the Borough of Leeds</i> . London/Leeds: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans/Reid Newsome.                |
| FRASER, D. | (1980) "Politics and society in the nineteenth-century" in FRASER, D. (ed.) <i>A History of Modern Leeds</i> . Manchester: Manchester University Press. |
| FRASER, D. | (1974) "Edward Baines" in HOLLIS, P. (ed.) <i>Pressure from Without in early Victorian England</i> . London: Edward Arnold.                             |

### Philip BARNES

**Witness on:** 24 August 1835

**Occupation:** Architect – De Carle, Lock and Barnes? Worked with John and later Robert De Carle and Nathaniel Lock.<sup>4</sup> This was a family business.

---

<sup>2</sup> WW refers to information taken from the *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament Vol. 1 1832 – 1885*, ed. STENTON, M. On this point see also Baines *The Life of Edward Baines* (1851) and Fraser "Politics and society in the nineteenth century" in *A History of Modern Leeds* 1980, p. 273.

**Address:** Norwich (SC), moved to London in 1835.<sup>5</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Linnæan Society; Norwich Society of Artists (president in 1825); Bruges Academy of Art; Horticultural Society, Norwich (SC); Society for the Promoting Practical Design.<sup>6</sup> Director of the Anglo-Chilean Society.<sup>7</sup> Founded the Royal Botanical Society (London) in 1839.<sup>8</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1808 – 1812 exhibited with Norwich Society of Artists.<sup>9</sup> His father also Philip Barnes was involved in demolition of old Norwich city walls and gatehouses in 1792.<sup>10</sup> His father may have also designed the Coslany Bridge in 1800.<sup>11</sup> He may have designed the alterations to Norfolk County Goal in 1823.<sup>12</sup>

**Additional Information:** Was witness with his son Robert Barnes (SC). Voted Tory in 1832.<sup>13</sup>

MEYNELL, G.

(1980) “ The Royal Botanic Society’s Garden, Regent’s Park”. *London Journal*. Vol. 6, pp. 135-145.

## **Robert BARNES**

**Witness on:** 24 August 1835

**Occupation:** Painter

**Address:** Norwich (SC)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Linnæan Society (SC); Bruges Academy of Art (SC)

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Was witness with father Philip Barnes (SC)

## **Ralph BERNAL**

**MP for:** Rochester City (PR)<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Richardson *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* 1989, p. 262.

<sup>4</sup> Jewson *The Jacobin City* 1975, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Norwich Castle Study Centre, information sheet.

<sup>6</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 74.

<sup>7</sup> Personal correspondence from Kathleen Noble (Barnes relative).

<sup>8</sup> ‘C. E. L.’ Letter 1909, p. 234.

<sup>9</sup> Mallalieu *The Norwich School* 1974, p. 79. SC35 q. 1405, p. 99.

<sup>10</sup> Jewson *The Jacobin City* 1975, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Norfolk County Archives NCR Case 16e/76.

<sup>12</sup> Norfolk County Archives NCR Case 16e/99.



**Occupation:** Barrister and West India Proprietor (WW)

**Address (1):** 11, Park Crescent, Portland Place, London (PR, D)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Reform (WW)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:** "Wrote various articles for the Annals" (WW)

**Additional Information:**

## **Professor M. Felix BOGÆRTS**

**Witness on:** 28 August 1835

**Occupation:** Professor of History at Antwerp (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Dr. John BOWRING LL. D.\* (also witness in 25 February 1836)**

**MP for:** Renfrew, Rutherglen, Dumbarton, Kilmarnock, Port Glasgow District of Burghs

(Radical Reformer) (RP)<sup>15</sup>

**Occupation:** "One of the Commercial Commissioners of the British Government" (SC36)<sup>16</sup>,  
editor of the *Westminster Review* (WW).

**Address (1):** London Field, Hackney<sup>17</sup>

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Free Trade, Reform (D)

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<sup>13</sup> Norwich Castle Study Centre, information sheet.

<sup>14</sup> PR refers to information taken from *The Parliamentary Review, a family Magazine, Vol. 1 - 1833*, ed. BUCKINGHAM, J. S.

<sup>15</sup> RP refers to *Return of Members of Parliament Part II*, 1878, pp. 351-363.

<sup>16</sup> SC36 refers to information taken from the text of the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures from the 1836 session.

<sup>17</sup> Bowring *Autobiographical Recollections of Sir John Bowring* 1877, p. 134.

**Society Membership:** Fellow of Linnæan Society (London & Paris), Fellow of the Historical Institute of the Scandanavian and Icelandic Societies, Royal Institute of the Netherlands, Royal Societies of Hungary and Copenhagen, Fresian, Athenian (WW).

**Publications:** *Peter Schlemihl* ‘the Man who lost his Shadow’ (1824), translation of German children’s story; *Minor Morals for Young People* (1834) and (1835) with illustrations by William Heath and George Cruikshank.<sup>18</sup>

**Additional Information:** Chair of the Select Committee on one occasion – 26 July 1836. In a caricature of the Radical group, Bowring is described as “walking encyclopaedia”.<sup>19</sup> Family connections with Devonshire woollen trade (D). Gave evidence before the 1832 Select Committee on the Silk Trade which was instrumental in inspiring a desire for the establishment of a School of Design.<sup>20</sup> Executor of Jeremy Bentham’s will and published and edited Bentham’s papers in 1843.<sup>21</sup>

BARTLE, G. F.

(1994) *An Old Radical and His Brood*. London: Janus Publishing Company.

BOWRING, L. B.

(1877) *Autobiographical Recollections of Sir John Bowring – with a brief memoir*. London: Henry S. King.

## **John BROCKELHURST**

**MP for:** Macclesfield

**Occupation:** Silk manufacturer, banker (WW)

**Address (1):** Fenton’s Hotel, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Hurdsfield House, Macclesfield (WW)

**Clubs:** Reform (D)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Joseph BROTHERTON\***

**MP for:** Salford Borough (Radical Reformer)

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<sup>18</sup> Bartle *An Old Radical and His Brood* 1994, p. 42.

<sup>19</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P.* 1960, p. 73.

<sup>20</sup> University College London Archives Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge General Committee Minutes Book, 1834, pp. 290-291.



**Occupation:** Cotton and Silk Manufacturer (retired) (WW), Harvey Brothertons and Co., 26 Cannon Street, Manchester.<sup>22</sup>

**Address (1):** 15 Manchester Buildings, London (PR)<sup>23</sup>

**Address (2):** Rose Hill, Pendleton, Salford (WW)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** In a caricature of the Radical group, Brotherton is depicted as a “‘good works’ vegetarian”.<sup>24</sup> “Dissenter and has been in the habit of preaching in a private chapel”.<sup>25</sup>

Good friend of John Potter MP (also on Select Committee) who spoke at the inauguration of Brotherton’s Memorial Statue in Peel Park, Salford.<sup>26</sup>

(1858) *Brotherton Memorial: The Inauguration of the Statue of the Late Joseph Brotherton, Esq. M. P. Peel Park, Salford, on Thurs. Aug. 5 1858.* Manchester: I. W. Petty.

## **James Silk BUCKINGHAM**

**MP for:** Sheffield Borough (Reformer)

**Occupation:** Founder of the *Athenaeum* Magazine and the *Oriental Herald*, editor of *The Parliamentary Review* (1833) (WW, PR)

**Address (1):** 16, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, London (PR)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Geological Society<sup>27</sup>

**Publications:** “Author of *Travels in Palestine, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia*”.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Op cit., p. 36.

<sup>22</sup> Information from *The Commerce Directory 1816-17*, Manchester: James Pigot (1816).

<sup>23</sup> “The greatest fun in the world is to go to a *cul-de-sac* off a dirty land near Palace Yard, called Manchester Buildings, a sort of senatorial pigeon-house, where the meaner fry of homeless M.P.s live, each in his one pair, two pair, three pair, as the case may be, and give a postman’s knock at every door in rapid succession. In a twinkling, the “collective wisdom” of Manchester Buildings and the Midland Counties poke out their heads... These men, however, have one redeeming quality – that they live in Manchester Buildings, and don’t care who knows it; they are out of fashion, and don’t care who are in, they are minding their business...” *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 53 (328), February 1843, p. 236.

<sup>24</sup> Munford William Ewart M. P. 1960, p. 73.

<sup>25</sup> Dod *Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 92.

<sup>26</sup> *Brotherton Memorial: The Inauguration of the Statue...* 1858, pp. 12-13; p. 17.

<sup>27</sup> Danby *Moorish Style* 1995, p. 150.

**Additional Information:** Was editor of a journal in India (*The Calcutta Journal*) but was banished from the country for contravening the Government regulations regarding the press (WW). This led to his *Parliamentary Review* which he claimed was “[t]o enable the Editor to communicate freely and frequently with the friends of Political and Commercial Freedom in all quarters of the globe...”.<sup>29</sup> Follower of Robert Owen and creator of a utopian scheme ‘Victoria’ based on his pamphlet *National Evils and Practical Remedies*. This was a rectangular form covering a square mile which was intended to house 10, 000 people “...in thirteen classes blending industrial, commercial and agricultural elements. Its street were to be roofed over with iron and glass”.<sup>30</sup>

## **Edward Lytton BULWER<sup>31</sup>**

**MP for:** Lincoln City (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:** Novelist and editor of *The New Monthly Magazine*<sup>32</sup>

**Address (1):** 36, Hertford Street, May-fair, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Knebworth, Stevenage, Hertfordshire (WW)

**Clubs:** Carlton (D)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:** *Falkland* (1827), *Pelham, or the Adventures of a Gentleman* and *The Disowned* (both 1828), *Devereux* (1829), *Paul Clifford* (1830), *Eugene Aram* (1832), *Godolphin* and *England and the English* (both 1833), *The Pilgrims of the Rhine* (1834), *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *Letter to the Late Cabinet Minister* (both 1834), *Rienzi, the last of the Roman Tribunes* (1835).

**Additional Information:** Lytton Bulwer aligned himself to occult philosophy taking his inspiration for the witch of Vitruvius in his book *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) from

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<sup>28</sup> Dod *Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 94.

<sup>29</sup> PR, preface.

<sup>30</sup> Egbert *Social Radicalism and the Arts* 1970, p. 410. See also Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, pp. 292-294.

<sup>31</sup> In most literature, Lytton Bulwer is generally termed Bulwer Lytton, however in the Select Committee listings ‘Bulwer’ is placed last, Charles Snyder (*Liberty and Morality* 1995) comments “[A]ctually “Bulwer-Lytton” was only one of several surnames the subject of this biography bore... [I]n retrospect, these changes seem symbolic. In his early life, when he went by “Bulwer”, his ambition for a political career loomed the larger [as opposed to his literary career]” (pp. 3-4).



Apuleius's *Golden Ass*, the transformation of *Apuleius*. Bulwer's representation of Pompeii prior to its sulphuric burial had triggered off his interest in the School of Neoplatonists... [i]n turn, this prompted him to delve into the work of other occult writers such as Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa, Jean Baptiste...".<sup>33</sup> Described in 1836 as "...dressed or rather *deshabillé* in the most lamentable style of foppery – a hookah in his mouth, his hair, whiskers, tuft etc. all grievously cared for...".<sup>34</sup>

SNYDER, C. W. (1973) *Edward Bulwer-Lytton 1803-1873, Centenary Exhibition, Knebworth House, May-December.*  
(1995) *Liberty & Morality – A Political Biography of Edward Bulwer-Lytton.* New York: Peter Lang.

## Henry Lytton BULWER<sup>35</sup>

MP for: Marylebone Borough (Radical Reformer)<sup>36</sup>

Occupation:

Address (1): 38 Hill Street, Berkeley Square

Address (2): 44 Parliament Street<sup>37</sup>

Clubs:

Society Membership:

Publications:

Additional Information: Brother of Edward Lytton Bulwer.

## John BURNET

Witness on: 24 June 1835

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<sup>32</sup> *Edward Bulwer-Lytton 1803-1875, Centenary Exhibition Knebworth House, May – September 1973*, (pages not numbered but equivalent of p. 9).

<sup>33</sup> Roberts *Gothic Immortals* 1990, pp. 160-161.

<sup>34</sup> *Edward Bulwer-Lytton 1803-1873*, p. 7.

<sup>35</sup> Presumably the preferences to surname of the older brother demanded the same requirement of the younger brother who is termed Mr. Henry Lytton Bulwer in the Select Committee listings.

<sup>36</sup> In 1835 the Coventry Radicals brought forward their own candidate, William Williams, in opposition to [Edward] Ellice [a Whig]. Bulwer pointed out that a third reform candidate would lessen the chances of the other two without standing a chance of winning himself. Bulwer tried to get Williams to stand down but he refused. Ellice could not be asked because he was in Naples recuperating from illness while his brother ran his campaign. Bulwer, sure in any case of a seat in St. Marylebone, therefore stood down himself and called upon all Coventry Liberals to work together for the return of Ellice and Williams" (Searby *Coventry Politics in the Age of the Chartists* 1964, pp. 9-10).

<sup>37</sup> This address is noted in some sources, the other in others so it is difficult to know whether they ran concurrently or whether there was a change of address during 1835.

**Occupation:** Painter and Engraver

**Address:** 2 Whitehead's Grove, London<sup>38</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Norwich Society of Arts,<sup>39</sup> Fellow of the Royal Society.<sup>40</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1815 – 1835<sup>41</sup> exhibited at the British Institution; from 1822 – 1828 exhibited with Norwich Society of Arts<sup>42</sup>; between 1808 and 1862 exhibited 4 paintings at the Royal Academy and six at Suffolk Street.<sup>43</sup>

**Additional Information:**

## **Robert BUTT**

**Witness on:** 3 August and 7 August 1835.

**Occupation:** Principal manager of the bronze and porcelain department of Messrs. Howell & James, 9 Regent Street, London (SC).<sup>44</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Witness with John Howell on 3 August (SC)

# **C**

## **Mr. CHEVERTON**

**Witness on:** 17 June 1836

**Occupation:** Ivory Applicator (SC)

**Address:** 72 Pratt Street, Camden Town (SC).

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<sup>38</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 43.

<sup>39</sup> Mallalieu *The Norwich School* 1974, p. 79

<sup>40</sup> Royal Society Archives List of Members.

<sup>41</sup> Exhibited after this date also, refer to n. 1 (Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 43).

<sup>42</sup> Op cit.

<sup>43</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 43, exact dates are not specified.

<sup>44</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 209.



**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **William CLAY**

**MP for:** Tower Hamlets Borough (Reformer) (PR)

**Occupation:** Merchant and ship owner in partnership with father (George Clay & Sons) (WW)

Chairman of the Grand Junction Waterworks Company (D)

**Address (1):** Salvador House, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Fulwell Lodge, Bishopgate? (D) Twickenham, Middlesex (WW)

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Reform, Union

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:** “Author of a work on Joint-Stock Banking, pamphlets on the currency, Banks of Issue etc.” (WW)

**Additional Information:**

## **George CLINT**

**Witness on:** 24 June 1835

**Occupation:** Painter

**Address:** 83, Gower Street, London <sup>45</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Formerly associate of the Royal Academy (SC), Norwich Society of Artists. <sup>46</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1802-1847 exhibited at the Royal Academy (ninety-nine paintings), at the British Society of Artists, Suffolk Street (fifteen paintings), and at the Old

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<sup>45</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 57.

<sup>46</sup> Mallalieu *The Norwich School* 1974, p. 79.

Water-Colour Society (two paintings); from 1815-1832 exhibited at the British Institute)<sup>47</sup>; from 1823-1833, exhibited at the Norwich Society of Artists.<sup>48</sup>

## **Charles Robert COCKERELL**

**Witness on:** 28 August 1835 & 2 August 1836

**Occupation:** Architect

**Address:** 8 Burlington Street, London<sup>49</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Associate of the Royal Academy (SC)

**Publications/exhibitions/buildings:** Bank of England.<sup>50</sup>

From 1818-1858 exhibited 17 architectural paintings at the Royal Academy.<sup>51</sup> Exhibited plans for the New Houses of Parliament at the National Gallery, opening on the 25 June in 1836.<sup>52</sup>

**Additional Information:** Cockerell "...conducted extensive archaeological researches in Greece and Asia Minor between 1810 and 1817. Returning to London he became a renowned exponent of the neo-classical style...".<sup>53</sup> Chaired meetings of the rebel group of architects meeting in opposition to the choice of Charles Barry's design for the New Houses of Parliament (26 March and 7 June 1836).<sup>54</sup>

Cockerell's uncle was Sir Charles Cockerell "...who had acquired a large fortune in the East India Company, spend much of it on ...Sezincote".<sup>55</sup> This Moorish style building was designed by Cockerell's father, Samual Pepys Cockerell.<sup>56</sup>

WATKIN, D. A. (1974) *The Life and Work of C. R. Cockerell*. London: Zwemmer Ltd.

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<sup>47</sup> Op cit., p. 57.

<sup>48</sup> Op cit.

<sup>49</sup> Watkin *The Life of C. R. Cockerell* 1974, pp. 3-4.

<sup>50</sup> Cockerell completed the work that John Soane had started (Jervis *High Victorian Design* 1983, p. 124).

<sup>51</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 58.

<sup>52</sup> *Designs offered for the New Houses of Parliament, now exhibiting in the National Gallery* (1836) London: W. Clowes and Sons.

<sup>53</sup> Denvir *The Early Nineteenth Century* 1984, p. 288; see also Conner "George Ledwell Taylor & the Lion..." 1979, pp. 135-140.

<sup>54</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>55</sup> Watkin *The Life of C. R. Cockerell* 1974, p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Danby *Moorish Style* 1995, pp. 154-155; see Cooper "Indian Architecture in England..." 1970, pp. 124-133 for details of building.



## **Nicholas William Ridley COLBOURNE**

**MP for:** Wells City (RP)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):**

**Address (2):** West Harling Hall, county Norfolk (RP)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

## **James CRABB**

**Witness on:** 19 August 1835

**Occupation:** Designer of Fancy Works (SC)

**Address:** 8, Shoe Lane, Fleet Street, London (SC)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1833-1836 exhibited paintings at the British Institute.<sup>57</sup>

**Additional Information:**

# **D**

## **John DAVENPORT**

**MP for:** Stoke-on-Trent Borough (Moderate Reformer) (D)

**Occupation:** Manufacturer, magistrate and Dept. Lieut. of Staffordshire (WW)

**Address (1):** 29 Parliament Street, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Westwood Hall, Leek, Staffordshire (WW)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

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<sup>57</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 128.

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

**Thomas Leverton DONALDSON**

**Witness on:** 10 March & 1 July 1836

**Occupation:** Architect (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Academy?; Honorary secretary to the Institute of British Architects;

“corresponding number to the French Institute and several foreign academies” (SC).<sup>58</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** Exhibited from 1816-1854 at the Royal Academy (twenty-seven architectural studies).<sup>59</sup>

**Additional Information:** One of the Committee of rebel architects meeting to protest against the choice of Charles Barry’s design for the New Houses of Parliament.<sup>60</sup>

## E

**Lord Francis EGERTON**<sup>61</sup>

**MP for:** Lancashire County (Southern Division)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 18, Belgrave Square, London (WW)

**Address (2):** Bridgewater House, St. James’s, London; Oatlands, Surrey (WW)

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Carlton (D)

**Society Membership:** Member of the British Association for the Advancement of Science?<sup>62</sup>

Geological Society of London.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> SC36 q. 331, p. 31.

<sup>59</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 82.

<sup>60</sup> *Designs offered for the New Houses of Parliament, now exhibiting in the National Gallery* (1836) London: W. Clowes and Sons.

<sup>61</sup> Francis Leveson Egerton.

<sup>62</sup> Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1984, pp. 353-354.

<sup>63</sup> Geological Society of London Archives – members list.



**Publications:** Literary distinction as Lord Francis Leweson Gower (WW)

**Additional Information:**

## **George ELD**

**Witness on:** 7 August 1835

**Occupation:** Corn Trade in Coventry (SC); Took over the editing and was principle shareholder of the *Coventry Standard* (renamed from *Coventry Mercury*) in 1836.<sup>64</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Mayor of Coventry (SC)

## **Howard ELPHINSTONE**

**MP for:** Hastings (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:** Barrister and formerly practised as Advocate at Doctors Commons (WW)

**Address (1):** 19 Eaton Place, London (WW)

**Address (2):** 1, College, Doctors Commons, London (WW); Ore Place, Hastings (D)

**Society Membership:** Fellow of the Royal Society, Fellow of the Geological Society, Fellow of the Horticultural Society (D), Linnaean Society,<sup>65</sup> Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.<sup>66</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** "...he was successively a corn miller, a silk dealer and silk dyer; his business prospered, as did his newspaper. He was also a painter in oils and watercolours of considerable distinction, and a talented antiquary: as last mayor of the unreformed corporation he was responsible for restoring St. Mary's Hall from the dilapidated state which resulted from centuries of neglect. Eld was a devout Anglican and the intellectual leader of Coventry

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<sup>64</sup> Searby *Coventry Politics in the Age of the Chartists* 1964, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> Linnaean Society Archives – members list.

<sup>66</sup> University College London SDUK 2 General Committee Minutes Book 1834, p. 68.

Conservatism. Until the 1840s he prophesied disastrous results from the 1832 Reform Bill and the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act”.<sup>67</sup>

**George Hampden EVANS**

**MP for:** Dublin Country (Whig) (PR)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 6, James Street, Buck-gate, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Portrem, County Dublin (D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

**William EWART (chair)\***

**MP for:** Liverpool Borough (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:** Merchant (Ewart, Myers & Company)<sup>68</sup> (WW), Barrister.

**Address (1):** 16 Eaton Place, Belgrave Square, London (PR)<sup>69</sup>

**Address (2):** Broadleas, Devizes (WW)

**Clubs:** Reform, United University (D)

**Society Membership:** President of Society for Promoting Practical Design.<sup>70</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Called to the bar at the Middle Temple (Jan 1827) (WW). Met

Benjamin Robert Haydon on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1835.<sup>71</sup> Excluded from the School Committee.<sup>72</sup>

Member of the Council of the University of London (D).

MUNFORD, W. A.	(1960) <i>William Ewart, M.P. 1798-1869. portrait of a radical.</i> London: Grafton & Co.
SHIRLEY, G. W.	(c.1930) <i>William Ewart: Pioneer of Public Libraries – a former Dumfries M.P.</i> Dumbries Libraries.

<sup>67</sup> Searby *Coventry Politics in the Age of the Chartists* 1964, p. 3.

<sup>68</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P.* 1960, p. 77.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p. 72.

<sup>70</sup> *Spectator* Sept. 15 1838, no. 533, p. 881.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, p. 78.

<sup>72</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 66.



# F

## **Earl of Kerry (William Thomas Petty Fitzmaurice)<sup>73</sup>**

**MP for:** Calne Borough

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 35 Cavendish Square.<sup>74</sup>

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.<sup>75</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** One of the proposed Special Committee set up by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, to discuss a School of Design.<sup>76</sup>

## **George FOGGO**

**Witness on:** 10 August 1835 (also a witness in 1836)

**Occupation:** Historical painter (specialising in the Scriptural)<sup>77</sup>

**Address:** 7 Manchester Street, London<sup>78</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** Exhibited from 1816-1835 at the British Institute; from 1816-1864, he exhibited 7 paintings at the Royal Academy; through this same period he exhibited 37 at Suffolk Street.<sup>79</sup>

**Additional Information:** In 1828 he is noted as living with George Foggo at 48 Cirencester Place.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Died 28 September 1836 and was replaced by John George Charles Fox Strangeways (RP).

<sup>74</sup> University College London Archives SDUK Rough Minutes 17a (on inside cover).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> University College London Archives SDUK General Committee Minutes Book 1834, p. 291.

<sup>77</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 100.

<sup>78</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 100.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

## **John FORT**

**MP for:** Clitheroe Borough (entertains Whig principles)

**Occupation:** Manufacturer in Blackburn (WW)

**Address (1):** Fenton's Hotel, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Reid Hall, Lancashire (WW, D)<sup>81</sup>

**Clubs:** Reform (D)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

# **G**

## **Thomas Field GIBSON**

**Witness on:** 3 August 1835

**Occupation:** Silk Manufacturer (SC)

**Address:** 1 Milk Street, The City.<sup>82</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Manufactured velvets, plain and figured silks (SC). One of the founders of the Spitalfields School of Design in 1838.<sup>83</sup>

## **George GROTE**

**MP for:** City of London (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:** Manager of Bank and merchant,<sup>84</sup> East India Proprietor (D)<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 146.

<sup>81</sup> This is titled 'Read Hall' in the RP.

<sup>82</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 160.

<sup>83</sup> Higgins "The Spitalfields Silk Industry..." 1989, p. 49; p. 132.



**Address (1):** 62 Threadneedle Street, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Dulwich Wood, Surrey (WW, D)

**Clubs:** Reform

**Society Membership:** Utilitarian Society<sup>86</sup>

**Publications:** *Statement of the Question of Parliamentary Reform* (1821); *Snalysis of the Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind*, by Philip Beauchamp (1822);<sup>87</sup> Response to Clinton's *Fasti Hellenici* in *The Westminster Review* (1826), pp. 269-331; *Essentials of Parliamentary Reform* (1831). Contributed to *The London Review*, a Radical magazine that first came out in April 1835.<sup>88</sup> "Author of publications on the Bank Charter".<sup>89</sup>

**Additional Information:** From 1826-1830, Grote worked with J. S. Mill and Henry Brougham on the University at Gower Street. Held "early morning classes" and "lectures in the evenings" at Grote's house.<sup>90</sup> Grote described in a caricature of the Radical group as the "wife managed banker historian".<sup>91</sup> Momigliano (1952) suggests that for Grote, Greek history provided the "...origins of democratic government and the principles of freedom of thought and of rational enquiry...[H]e saw a parallel between the education imparted by the Sophists and Socrates and that imparted in modern universities".<sup>92</sup> However, although he began by writing a great deal on Greek history, during the years of Grote's election to parliament, he did not publish anything.<sup>93</sup> Grote however, must have been active in research and thinking, during this parliamentary period.<sup>94</sup>

CHAMBERS, M. (1996) "George Grote's *History of Greece*" in CALDER III, W. M. & TRZASKOMA, S. (eds.) *George Grote Reconsidered – A 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration with a 1<sup>st</sup> edition of his Essay "Of the Athenian Government"*. Hildesheim: Weidmann.

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<sup>84</sup> Grote, Prescott, Grote & Prescott (Pigot & Co's *Metropolitan new Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 127.

<sup>85</sup> Put footnote here from one of the biographies. He is described as "Citizen and needle maker" presumably due to his address in RP.

<sup>86</sup> Momigliano *George Grote & the Study of Greek History* 1957, p. 7.

<sup>87</sup> "Grote edits Jeremy Bentham's notes attacking religion and publishes them as a book" (Vaio "George Grote and James Mill" in *George Grote Reconsidered* 1996, p. 60).

<sup>88</sup> Bonython *King Cole* 1982 p. 17.

<sup>89</sup> Dod *Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 121.

<sup>90</sup> Op cit., p. 16.

<sup>91</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P.* 1960, p. 73.

<sup>92</sup> Momigliano *George Grote & the Study of Greek History* 1957, p. 10.

<sup>93</sup> Momigliano *George Grote and the Study of Greek History* notes this period as being from 1831-1841 (1952, p. 8).

<sup>94</sup> Note his 'scientific' historical approach.

MOMIGLIANO, A.	(1952) <i>George Grote and the Study of Greek History – an inaugural lecture delivered at University College London</i> , 19 February. Bristol: Western Printing Services.
VAIO, J.	(1996) “George Grote and James Mill: How to Write History” in CALDER III, W. M. & TRZASKOMA, S. (eds.) <i>George Grote Reconsidered – A 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration with a 1<sup>st</sup> edition of his Essay “Of the Athenian Government”</i> . Hildesheim: Weidmann.

## Claude GUILLOTE

**Witness on:** 14 August 1835

**Occupation:** Maker of Jacquard Looms (SC)

**Address:** 2 John Street, Spitalfields.<sup>95</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

# H

## Robert HARRISON

**Witness on:** 3 August 1835

**Occupation:** Silk Manufacturer in the firm Brydes, Campbell and Harrison (SC)

**Address:** 18 Philpot Lane, London.<sup>96</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Was a member on the Spitalfields School Board (1838).<sup>97</sup>

## Benjamin HAWES (Jnr.)

**MP for:** Lambeth Borough (Reformer)

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<sup>95</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 174.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.



**Occupation:** Soap Manufacturer (D)

**Address (1):** Commercial Road, Lambeth (D)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Reform (D)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Deputy Lieutenant for Surrey (RP)

## **David Ramsey HAY**

**Witness on:** 15 June 1835

**Occupation:** Housepainter, decorator and gilder (SC)<sup>98</sup>

**Address:** Edinburgh (SC)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring adapted to Interior Decoration, Manufactures, and other useful purposes* (1828).

**Additional Information:**

## **Benjamin Robert HAYDON**

**Witness on:** 28 June, 26 July (also attended 12 July)

**Occupation:** Historical painter (SC)<sup>99</sup>

**Address:** 4, Burwood Place<sup>100</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Norwich Society of Artists<sup>101</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1807-1845 exhibited at the Royal Academy (eleven paintings), at the British Society of Artists, Suffolk Street (thirty paintings); at the Old Water-Colour Society (twelve paintings).<sup>102</sup> Exhibited in 1824 at the Norwich Society of Artists.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Higgins "The Spitalfields Silk Industry..." 1989, p. 49; p. 128.

<sup>98</sup> This business was set up in 1828 (Jervis 1984, pp. 225-226).

<sup>99</sup> Murray *The Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists* 1984, pp. 187-188.

<sup>100</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 251.

**Additional Information:** Met William Ewart on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1835.<sup>104</sup>

Lectured on painting and design in 1835, visiting all the principle towns in England and Scotland.<sup>105</sup>

Attended Charles Bell's lectures on anatomy.<sup>106</sup> Haydon was "...the great champion of the Elgin Marbles" and studied them in 1807.<sup>107</sup>

HAYDON, F. W.	(1876) <i>Memoirs of Benjamin Robert Haydon</i> . London: Chatto & Windus.
PIDGLEY, M.	(1986) <i>Benjamin Robert Haydon 1786-1846, Bi-centenary Exhibition</i> . First held at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum Exeter: Exeter City Council.

## **John HEATHCOTE<sup>108</sup>**

**MP for:** Tiverton Borough (Whig)

**Occupation:** Lace Manufacturer (WW)

**Address (1):** 28, Great George Street, London (WW)

**Address (2):** Tiverton (WW)

**Clubs:** Reform (WW)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** He invented and patented machinery for lace manufacture (WW, D).

His company which was established in 1808 is still active today trading under the same name of John Heathcoat & Co. Ltd ([www.heathcoat.co.uk](http://www.heathcoat.co.uk)).

## **John HENNING (Snr.)**

**Witness on:** 17 August 1835

**Occupation:** "Modeller"<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Mallalieu *The Norwich School* 1974, p. 79.

<sup>102</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 132.

<sup>103</sup> Op cit.

<sup>104</sup> Munford *William Ewart M. P.* 1960, p. 78.

<sup>105</sup> Find reference, check out lectures 1844.

<sup>106</sup> Bird "The Development of Art and Design Education..." 1992, pp. 60-61; Pidgley *Benjamin Robert Haydon* 1986, pages not numbered.

<sup>107</sup> Jervis *High Victorian Design* 1983, p. 60.

<sup>108</sup> This is the spelling according to the Select Committee listings, however in other literature, his name is noted at 'Heathcoat'.

<sup>109</sup> Malden *John Henning 1771-1851* 1977, pages not numbered but p. 4 equivalent.



**Address:** 17, Lower Belgrave Place, Pimlico<sup>110</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Paisley Society, or branch of the British Convention. Founder member of the British Society of Artists, Suffolk Street. Honorary member of the Royal Scottish Academy (1827), extraordinary member of the Glasgow Dilettanti Society (1832).<sup>111</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions/buildings:** Sculpted (with John Henning jnr.) frieze on entrance gateway at Hyde Park Corner and the frieze of the Athenaeum club (SC). From 1812-1835 exhibited twenty 'Sculptures' at the Royal Academy, thirty-five at the British Society of Artists, Suffolk Street.<sup>112</sup>

**Additional Information:** Politically active. Sold the Radical *Weavers Magazine* published in Paisley, while living in London.<sup>113</sup> Lectured at Paisley Philosophical Society on the Elgin Marbles in 1832.<sup>114</sup>

MALDEN, J.

(1977) *John Henning 1771-1851, "a very ingenious modeller..."*. Renfrew: Renfrew District Council Museum & Art Galleries Department.

## **William HILTON**

**Witness on:** 26 July 1836

**Occupation:** Painter (scriptural<sup>115</sup>) and keeper of the Royal Academy (SC)<sup>116</sup>

**Address:** The Royal Academy

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Academy<sup>117</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1803-1839 exhibited at the Royal Academy (thirty-one paintings), at the British Institute (twenty paintings) and at the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (one painting).<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., no. 27 in appendix.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., equivalent of p. 2.

<sup>112</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 135.

<sup>113</sup> Malden *John Henning 1771-1851* 1977, equivalent of p. 3.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., equivalent of p. 10. This visual research aided the copy of the Parthenon frieze (the Elgin Marbles) for the frieze on the Athenaeum club.

<sup>115</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 138.

<sup>116</sup> Became Keeper in 1827 after Henry Thomson (Vincent "William Hilton" n.d., equivalent of p. 2).

<sup>117</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 269; Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 138.

<sup>118</sup> Op. cit.

**Additional Information:** Travelled to Rome via Milan in 1825.<sup>119</sup>

## **Thomas Christopher HOFLAND**

**Witness on:** 1 July 1836

**Occupation:** Painter

**Address:** 6, Pembroke Square, London<sup>120</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Society of British Artists (Trustee in 1835; Secretary and Trustee in 1836).<sup>121</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1798-1843 exhibited at the Royal Academy (seventy-two paintings); at the British Institute (one hundred and forty-one paintings), and the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (fifty-five paintings).<sup>122</sup>

**Additional Information:**

## **Henry Thomas HOPE\***

**MP for:** Gloucester City (Conservative)

**Occupation:** Manager of the London and West Joint Stock Bank (D)

**Address (1):** Duchess Street, London (D)

**Address (2):** “has property near Gloucester”.<sup>123</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Involvement in concurrent Parliamentary debates:**

**Additional Information:**

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<sup>119</sup> Vincent “William Hilton” n.d., equivalent p. 1.

<sup>120</sup> Bradshaw *Royal Society of British Artists* 1973, p. 51.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 140.

<sup>123</sup> Dod *Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 129.



## Henry HOWARD

**Witness on:** 26 July 1836

**Occupation:** Secretary of the Royal Academy (SC). Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy.<sup>124</sup>

**Address:** 5, Newman Street, London.<sup>125</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Academy.

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1794-1847 exhibited at the Royal Academy (two hundred and fifty- nine paintings), and at the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (two paintings).<sup>126</sup> From 1806-1835 exhibited at the British Institute (seventy-two paintings).<sup>127</sup>

**Additional Information:** Lived abroad in Rome (SC).<sup>128</sup> Painted scenes from the story of Pandora on Sir John Soane's house ceiling.

## John HOWELL

**Witness on:** 3 August 1835

**Occupation:** Partner in Messrs. Howell & James, 9 Regent Street (SC).<sup>129</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Witness with Robert Butt (SC)

## Thomas James HOWELL

**Witness on:** 1 March 1836

**Occupation:** Inspector under the Factory Regulation Act.

**Address:**

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<sup>124</sup> Denvir *High Victorian Design* 1984, p. 295.

<sup>125</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 286.

<sup>126</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 144.

<sup>127</sup> Op cit., pp. 285-7.

<sup>128</sup> Op cit., p. 144

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Inspected factories in Worcester, Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Kidderminster (SC).

## **Frederick Yates HURLSTONE**

**Witness on:** 21 June; 24 June

**Occupation:** Painter

**Address:** 9, Chester Street, Grovsnor Place<sup>130</sup>.

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Society of British Artists<sup>131</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1821-1836 exhibited at the British Institute (sixteen paintings).<sup>132</sup> From 1821-1870 exhibited at the Royal Academy (thirty-seven paintings).<sup>133</sup> From 1833-1836 exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists (forty-one paintings).<sup>134</sup>

## **William HUTT (1836 only)**

**MP for:** Kingston-on-Hull Borough (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 54, Conduit Street (PR)

**Address (2):** Streatham Castle (D)

**Clubs:** Oxford and Cambridge, United Service

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Involvement in concurrent Parliamentary debates:**

**Additional Information:** Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (WW)

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<sup>129</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 209.

<sup>130</sup> Bradshaw *Royal Society of British Artists* 1973, p. 55.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 292.

<sup>133</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 148.

<sup>134</sup> Op cit., p. 55.



## Joseph HUME

**MP for:** Middlesex County (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:** East India Proprietor (WW); Magistrate in Westminster (D)

**Address (1):** 6, Bryanston Square, London (PR, WW)

**Address (2):** Bromley Hall, East Somerton, Norfolk (D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Fellow of the Royal Society, Vice-President of the Society of Arts, member of the College of Surgeons (Edinburgh and London) Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society (WW, D), President of the Society for the Diffusion of Practical and Moral Knowledge.<sup>135</sup> Society for Promoting Practical Design.<sup>136</sup>

**Additional Information:** In 1824 he chaired the Select Committee on Artisans and Machinery, presenting the Sixth Report of the Select Committee on the 3 May that year.<sup>137</sup> Henry Warburton was Hume's 1832 Election campaign manager.<sup>138</sup>

CHANCELLOR, V.	(1986) <i>The Political Life of Joseph Hume 1777-1855: the Scot who was for 30 years a radical leader in the British House of Commons</i> . London: Bennett Lodge.
HUCH, R. K.	(1985) & ZIEGLER, P. R. <i>Joseph Hume: the people's M. P.</i> Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society.

## I

## Sir Robert INGLIS

**MP for:** Oxford University (Conservative) (PR)

**Occupation:** Called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn (1818). Dept.-Lieut. of Bedfordshire, Governor of King's College, Oxford (WW). Director of the University Life Assurance Society (D)

**Address (1):** 7 Bedford Square, Battersea Rise (D)

**Address (2):** Milton Bryant, Bedford (D)

**Clubs:** United University (D)

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<sup>135</sup> Huch & Ziegler *Joseph Hume* 1985, p. 78.

<sup>136</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 74.

<sup>137</sup> Chancellor *The Political Life of Joseph Hume* 1986, pp. 17-18.

<sup>138</sup> Op cit., p. 77. See Henry Warburton in W section of 1835 Committee Member profiles.

**Society Membership:** Senior Treasurer of the Sons of the Clergy, Vice-President of the Clergy Orphan Society, Royal Academy, Society of Antiquities, Fellow of the Royal Society (WW).

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

**J**

**Thomas JAMES**

**Witness on:** 3 August 1835

**Occupation:** Partner in Messrs. Howell & James, 9 Regent Street (SC).<sup>139</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** His partner John Howell was interviewed on the same day (SC). The company ('wholesale house') "...purchased largely of silk and cotton manufactures of Spitalfields, Manchester and Macclesfield".<sup>140</sup> Was one of the Board of the Spitalfields School of Design (1838).<sup>141</sup>

**Charles Denham Orlando JEPHSON**

**MP for:** Mallow Borough (Whig)

**Occupation:** Dept. Lieut. of the County of Cork (WW)

**Address (1):**

**Address (2):** Mallow Castle, Co. of Cork (WW)

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Union (D)

**Society Membership:** Geological Society of London.<sup>142</sup>

**Publications:**

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<sup>139</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 209.

<sup>140</sup> SC35 q. 331, p. 25.

<sup>141</sup> Higgins "The Spitalfields Silk Industry..." 1989, p. 135.

<sup>142</sup> Geological Society of London Archives, members list.



**Additional Information:**

# K

**Baron Leo von KLENZE**

**Witness on:** 13 August 1836

**Occupation:** Architect and Privy Councillor to His Majesty the King of Bavaria (Ludwig I)

(SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions/buildings:** The Max-Palais, Munich (1822-6); the Königsbau, Munich (1826-35); Alte Pinakothek, Munich (1825-36). He designed “furniture and lighting for many of his buildings”.<sup>143</sup>

**Additional Information:** Klenze had travelled to Italy in 1818, then again in 1823-4, and also to Greece in 1834. This travel and study led to his very neo-classical style.<sup>144</sup>

# L

**John LANDSEER**

**Witness on:** 19 July 1836

**Occupation:** Engraver (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Associate of the Royal Academy (SC).<sup>145</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1791-1852 exhibited at the Royal Academy (seventeen engravings) and at the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (two engravings).<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Jervis *High Victorian Design* 1984, p. 272.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.; see Fischer “A Century of Architecture” 1971, pp. 346-348 for details.

**Additional Information:** Edwin Landseer was his son (SC).

## **David LEWIS\***

**MP for:** Carmarthen County (Conservative) (WW)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** Chester Street, London (WW)

**Address (2):** Stradey, Co. Carmarthen (RP)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** One of the proposed Special Committee set up by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, to discuss a School of Design?<sup>147</sup>

## **James Mathews LEIGH**

**Witness on:** 12 July 1836.

**Occupation:** Painter (specialising in Scriptural).<sup>148</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** Edited *The Library of Fine Arts* with a council of artists (SC)

From 1825-1849 exhibited at the Royal Academy (twenty-five paintings); the British Institute (twenty-three paintings) and the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (twenty-nine paintings).<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 164.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> University College London Archives SDUK General Committee Minutes Book 1834, p. 291.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.



# M

## **James Alexander Stewart MACKENZIE**

**MP for:** Ross and Cromartyshire (WW)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 8, St. James's Place, London (WW)

**Address (2):** Seaforth, Co. Ross (WW)

**Clubs:** Athenaeum (D)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Commissioner of the India Board (D)

## **John MARTIN**

**Witness:** 17 August 1835 & 24 June 1836

**Occupation:** Painter

**Address:** 30, Alsop's Buildings (became Alsopp Terrace)<sup>150</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Appointed member of Brussels and Antwerp Academies by King Leopold of Belgian.<sup>151</sup> Knight of St. Luke's Academy, Rome, member of New Water-Colour Society.<sup>152</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** Published a pamphlet describing his painting 'Belshazzar's Feast' (c.1821). He produced "... at least eleven such pamphlets which he published to accompany his historical paintings. The format was basically the same for all, containing an outline engraving upon which all the principal objects were numbered; these were then listed, followed by a text quoting the historical sources, passing from the Bible and occasionally poetry either based on the story or eulogising the painting itself".<sup>153</sup> Provided the designs for the engravings of Fonthill Abbey in John Rutter's *Delineations of Fonthill and the Abbey* (1823) and Britton's *Graphical and Literary Illustrations of Fonthill* (1823). Between 1827 and 1850 published a series of plans

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<sup>150</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, p. 371.

<sup>151</sup> Johnstone *John Martin* 1974, p. 19.

<sup>152</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 185.

for the improvement of London's amenities, these included *Plan for Improving the Air and Water of the Metropolis* (1832).<sup>154</sup>

Add exhibitions. 1820 exhibited the designs for the memorial bridge across the New Road in London.<sup>155</sup>

**Additional Information:** Martin was apprenticed to a coach-painter, then a china painter.<sup>156</sup>

John Martin made engravings of the Moorish style architecture at Sezincote, Gloucestershire in 1817.<sup>157</sup> The painter was mentioned in Edward Bulwer Lytton's *England and the English* (1833).<sup>158</sup> He was a regular guest at Sir John Peel's home.<sup>159</sup> "His studio was visited by royalty and men and women of letters, as well as by artists, scientists and theologians. His weekly evenings, originally a gathering of chess enthusiasts, became after 1825 regular forums for all kinds of discussions..."<sup>160</sup>

In his painting, he was concerned with accuracy of detail such as architectural and historical, he was also interested in the natural sciences.<sup>161</sup> In 1835, he appeared three times before the Select Committee on Accidents in Mines.<sup>162</sup> In 1836, he was part of a voluntary and private committee that discussed his plans about improving London's amenities. These plans had previously been given support by the British Institute of British Architects.<sup>163</sup>

JOHNSTONE, C. (1974) *John Martin*. London: Academy Editions.

## John MILLWARD

**Witness on:** 3 March 1835

**Occupation:** Lace Manufacturer (SC)

**Address:** Olney, Buckinghamshire (SC)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

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<sup>153</sup> Op cit., p. 16.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Denvir *High Victorian Design* 1984, p. 298.

<sup>157</sup> Cooper "Indian Architecture in England" 1970, p. 126.

<sup>158</sup> Johnstone *John Martin* 1974, p. 19.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., pp. 19-20.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., pp. 14-15, p. 18.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 20.



**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **George J. MORANT**

**Witness on:** 17 June 1836

**Occupation:** House Decorator (Morant & Son), 88<sup>164</sup> New Bond Street, London. (SC)<sup>165</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **James MORRISON\***

**MP for:** Ipswich Borough (Reformer)

**Occupation:** Managed James Morrison & Co., London (SC)<sup>166</sup>

**Address (1):** 57, Upper Harley Street, London (PR, WW)

**Address (2):** Fonthill, Wilshire; Batham Hill, Surrey (WW)

**Clubs:** Westminster (D).

**Society Membership:** Geological Society of London.<sup>167</sup>

**Publications:** Author of a pamphlet on railway legislation (WW)

**Additional Information:** Also a witness before the Select Committee, on 30 July 1835 (SC)

## **The Lord ADVOCATE (John Archibald MURRAY)**

**MP for:** Leith, Portobello, Musselburgh district of Burghs.

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):**

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<sup>164</sup> Described as "...house decorator, carver, gilder and picture framer maker to His Majesty" in Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 279.

<sup>165</sup> "At Sheringhams, [John Papworth]... had met the cabinet-maker George Morant, for whom he designed a Bond Street shop front in 1817" (Jervis *High Victorian Design* 1984, p. 370).

<sup>166</sup> Wholesale haberdasher in London (WW, pp. 278-279).

<sup>167</sup> Geological Society of London Archives – members list.

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

**N**

**James NASMYTH**

**Witness on:** 8 March 1836

**Occupation:** Manufacturing engineer, Manchester (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Connection to Manchester Mechanics' Institute.

Youngest son of Alexander Nasmyth, the celebrated Scottish painter.

**O**

**Daniel O'CONNELL**

**MP for:** Dublin (Repealer)

**Occupation:** 2, Hanover Square, London (D)

**Address (1):**

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Catholic Association (1823)



**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Associate with Sheil and Wyse

**James OSWALD**

**MP for:** Glasgow City (Reformer, inclining to Radicalism) (D)

**Occupation:** Merchant in Glasgow and a Dept. Lieut. of Ayrshire and Lanarkshire (WW)

**Address (1):** 18, Downing Street, London

**Address (2):** Shieldhall, Lanark (RP, D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

# P

**John Buonarotti PAPWORTH**

**Witness on:** 21 August 1835

**Occupation:** Architect (SC)<sup>168</sup>

**Address:** 10, Caroline Street, Bedford Square, London (SC).

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Helped found the Institute of British Architects in 1834.<sup>169</sup> Founder member of Associated Artists in Water-Colours.<sup>170</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions/buildings:** Contributed to Ackermann's *Repository of Arts* (1809-28), these images were reprinted in *Select Views in London* (1816) and *Rural Residences* (1818).

**Additional Information:** Was the first Superintendent of the design school.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Jervis (*High Victorian Design* 1984) notes how he worked in many media and that "...the design of furniture was one of Papworth's major activities (pp. 369-379).

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>171</sup> British Museum MS Add 31218, f. 59.

## **John PARKER (1836 only)**

**MP for:** Sheffield Borough (Whig)

**Occupation:** Called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn (1824) (WW)

**Address (1):** 3 King's Bench Walk, Temple (D)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Brooks's, Reform (WW)

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Involvement in concurrent Parliamentary debates:**

**Additional Information:** Appointed one of the Lord Commissioners of the Treasury (RP)

## **Sir John Dean PAUL**

**Witness on:** 19 July 1836

**Occupation:** Banker, founder of Kensal Green Cemetery, Harrow Road NW10 in 1832 (The General Cemetery Company).<sup>172</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** Between 1802-1837, he exhibited twenty landscape paintings at the Royal Academy.<sup>173</sup>

**Additional Information:**

## **John PEEL**

**Witness on:** 12 July 1836

**Occupation:** Picture liner and restorer (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

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<sup>172</sup> Meller *London Cemeteries* 1981, pp. 180-181.



**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

**Sir Robert PEEL**

**MP for:** Tamworth Borough (Conservative) (PR)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 4 Whitehall Gardens, London (WW, PR)

**Address (2):** Drayton Manor, Staffordshire (WW)

**Clubs:** Carlton, United University (WW)

**Society Membership:** British Association for the Advancement of Science.<sup>174</sup> Royal Society.<sup>175</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Governor of the Charter House and Commissioner of the Church, and Corporation Land Tax (D). April 1835, resigned as Prime Minister. Collected Dutch Painting.<sup>176</sup>

EASTWOOD, D.	(1992) "Peel and the Tory Party Reconsidered". <i>History Today</i> , Vol. 42, March, pp. 27-33.
EGREMONT, M.	(1985) "The Third Earl of Egremont and His Friends". <i>Apollo</i> , October, pp. 280-287.
MOURDAUNT CROOK, J.	(1966) "Sir Robert Peel: Patron of the Arts". <i>History Today</i> Vol. XVI, no. 1, January, pp. 3-11.

**Richard POTTER**

**MP for:** Wigan Borough (Whig principles, inclining to Radicalism) (D)

**Occupation:** Cotton Manufacturer, 44 Cannon Street, Manchester.<sup>177</sup> A sleeping partner in this firm (D).

**Address (1):** 14, Manchester Buildings, London (D)

**Address (2):** Broughton House, Lancashire (WW, D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

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<sup>173</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 213.  
<sup>174</sup> Morrell & Thakray *Gentlemen of Science* 1984, p. 229.  
<sup>175</sup> Royal Society Archives – members list.  
<sup>176</sup> See Egremont "The Third Earl of Egremont..." 1985, pp. 281.  
<sup>177</sup> T & R Potter documented in *The Commerce Directory for 1816-17, containing the Names, Trades & Situations of the Merchants, Manufacturers, Tradesmen etc* (1816).

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** John Potter was Richard Potter's father and men like his sons, Joseph Brotherton, John Edward Taylor, John Shuttleworth, Absalom Watkin, William Cowdray.

Unitarian.<sup>178</sup>

**Philip PUSEY (1836 only)**

**MP for:** Chippenham (Conservative)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 17 Park Lane, London (WW)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Carlton (WW)

**Society Membership:** Royal Society;<sup>179</sup> Geological Society of London.<sup>180</sup>

**Publications:**

**Involvement in concurrent Parliamentary debate:**

**Additional Information:** The elder brother of Dr. Edward Pusey<sup>181</sup> who was part of the Oxford Movement.<sup>182</sup>

**John PYE**

**Witness on:** 5 July, 26 July 1836

**Occupation:** Landscape engraver, London (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** Between 1824-1829, exhibited four engravings at the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Wolff & Seed *The Culture of Capital* 1988, p. 50.

<sup>179</sup> Royal Society Archives – members list.

<sup>180</sup> Geological Society of London Archives – members list.

<sup>181</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1959, p. 355.

<sup>182</sup> Hoppen "The Oxford Movement" 1967, p. 147.

<sup>183</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 226.



**Additional Information:** "...[h]e was engaged in a constant struggle with the Royal Academy to get that body to admit engravers as full members".<sup>184</sup>

# R

## **Ramsey Richard REINAGLE**

**Witness on:** 17 June 1836

**Occupation:** Painter (SC)

**Address:** 29, Albany Street, Regent's Park (SC)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Academy; Association of Old Water-Colour Society.<sup>185</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1815-1822, he exhibited at the Norwich Society of Artists.<sup>186</sup>

From 1788-1857, Reinagle exhibited landscape paintings at the Royal Academy (two hundred and forty-four), at the British Institute (fifty-one) at the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (two) and at the Old Water-Colour Society (sixty-seven).<sup>187</sup>

## **George RENNIE**

**Witness on:** 17 August 1835 (also witness on 21 June 1836; also seems to have attended on 12 July 1836).<sup>188</sup>

**Occupation:** Sculptor

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1828-1838 he exhibited sculpture at the Royal Academy (fourteen) and at the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (three).<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Denvir *High Victorian Design* 1984, p. 303.

<sup>185</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 231.

<sup>186</sup> Mallalieu *The Norwich School* 1974, p. 79.

<sup>187</sup> Op cit.

<sup>188</sup> SC36, p. 149.

<sup>189</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 231.

**Additional Information:** Lived in Italy and other parts of the Continent for eight years (SC). MP for Ipswich and later Governor of the Falkland Isles (Liberal).<sup>190</sup>

## **Thomas Spring RICE**

**MP for:** Cambridge Borough (Whig)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 8 Mansfield Street, London (D)

**Address (2):** Mount Trenchard, near Shannogolden, Limerick (D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** The Geological Society of London.<sup>191</sup> Fellow of the Astronomical Society (D)

**Publications:** Published a pamphlet on the Grand Jury system (1816) (D)

**Additional Information:** Was Chancellor of the Exchequer (1835-9) and "...a loyal son of Trinity College, Cambridge, where Peacock and Whewell were tutors." Was part of the government group who heard the 1835 Committee set up by the British Association for the Advancement of Science, aiming to get funding for an Antarctic expedition to pursue research into magnetic poles.<sup>192</sup> "Mr. Spring Rice is one of the Trustees of the National Gallery...".<sup>193</sup> One of the proposed Special Committee set up by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, to discuss a School of Design.<sup>194</sup>

## **Sir Matthew White RIDLEY<sup>195</sup>**

**MP for:** Newcastle-on-Tyne Borough (Whig)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 10, Carlton Gardens, London

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

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<sup>190</sup> Bell "Haydon versus Shree" 1959, p. 352.

<sup>191</sup> Rudwick *The Great Devonian Controversy* 1985, list of members.

<sup>192</sup> Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1984, p. 222.

<sup>193</sup> Taken from the evidence of William Seguer SC36, p. 126.

<sup>194</sup> University College London archives SDUK General Committee Minutes Book 1834, p. 291.

<sup>195</sup> Died and was replaced by John Hodgson on 27 July 1836 (RP).



**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Joseph Clinton ROBERTSON**

**Witness on:** 2 September 1835

**Occupation:** Connected to the *Mechanics' Magazine* (SC).

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Arthur ROEBUCK**

**MP for:** Bath City (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 15, Grays Inn, London (D)

**Address (2):** 5 Raymond Buildings (D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Utilitarian Society,<sup>196</sup> Society for Promoting Practical Design.<sup>197</sup>

**Publications:** *Pamphlets for the People* (1835-6). "Roebuck's view, in a tract written for the National Political Union, that educated people would automatically be industrious, peaceable, and incapable of feeling themselves oppressed, was widely accepted".<sup>198</sup> "Written Much for the Westminster Review".<sup>199</sup>

**Additional Information:** Attended Mill's Debating Society.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Momigliano *George Grote and the Study of Greek History* 1952, p. 7.

<sup>197</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p.74.

<sup>198</sup> Wiener *War of the Unstamped* 1969, p. 34.

<sup>199</sup> Dod *Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 158.

<sup>200</sup> Bonython *King Cole* 1982 p. 16.

## **Lord John RUSSELL**

**MP for:** Stroud Borough (Whig)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** Wilton Crescent<sup>201</sup>

**Address (2):** Army Pay Office, Whitehall.<sup>202</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.<sup>203</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** One of the politicians in the Lord Grey's ministry who were responsible for drafting the Reform Bill (1832).<sup>204</sup>

# **S**

## **Lord Viscount SANDON**

**MP for:** Liverpool (Conservative)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 41, Grosvenor Street, London (WW)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** British Association for the Advancement of Science.<sup>205</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Henry SASS**

**Witness on:** 3 March 1836

**Occupation:** Painting Teacher (SC)<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Lincoln County Archives TDE H1/119.

<sup>202</sup> University College London Archives SDUk 1834/5 Rough Minutes 17a (On inside cover).

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> See Jones *George Cruikshank* 1978, p. 50.



**Address:** 6, Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury.<sup>207</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1809 – 1821, he exhibited at the British Institution (eight works),<sup>208</sup> from 1807-1839, he exhibited mythological paintings at the Royal Academy (eighty-four) and at the Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (three).<sup>209</sup>

**Additional Information:**

## **Joshua SCHOLEFIELD\***

**MP for:** Birmingham Borough (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:** Merchant, Scholefield & Taylor, Minorities (34 Bull Street, Birmingham).<sup>210</sup>

Director of the National Provincial Bank of England and Metropolitan Life Assurance Society (D).

**Address (1):** 12 Cecil Street, Strand, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Edgbaston Grove, Birmingham (D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Birmingham Political Union.<sup>211</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** “Pledged himself in 1832 to resign his seat whenever a majority of his constituents expressed themselves dissatisfied with his general Parliamentary conduct”.<sup>212</sup> “A very small, tound man, ruddy-complexioned, balding and bespectacled, he looked the stereotype of an office clerk; perhaps because of the weakness of his voice, he was reluctant to speak at public meetings. His education and temperament seemingly suited him for details of business and

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<sup>205</sup> “Lord Sandon... was a leading member of the Association’s statistical section” (Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1984, p. 331).

<sup>206</sup> “Of the countless 19<sup>th</sup>-century art schools, doubtlessly the most respected were Sass’s, Leigh’s and the Royal Academy” (Walkley *Artists’ Houses in London* 1994, p. 196).

<sup>207</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 345.

<sup>208</sup> Graves *The British Institution* 1969, pp. 475-476.

<sup>209</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 245.

<sup>210</sup> Pigot & Co. *’s Directory of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and North Wales for 1828-9*, London: Pigot & Co., p. 799. This title had become Joshua Scholefield and Sons by 1845 (*Post Office Directory of Birmingham, Warwickshire and Part of Staffordshire*, London: W. Kelly & Co., p. 63). See also ‘Records of Messrs. Scholefield, Goodman & Sons Ltd., merchants MS 1717 (Acc 92/110), Birmingham Public Library.

<sup>211</sup> Flick *The Birmingham Political Union* 1978, p. 19.

not for public affairs. But he was moderately successful as a merchant, banker, and manufacturer, and he was highly respected in all circles of the community...”.<sup>213</sup>

## **William SEGUIER**

**Witness on:** 8 July 1836 (with William Wilkins)

**Occupation:** Keeper of the National Gallery (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** Responsible to the trustees of the National Gallery, Mr. Ridley Colbourne and Mr. Spring Rice amongst them.<sup>214</sup>

## **Sir Martin Archer SHEE**

**Witness on:** 15 July 1836

**Occupation:** Portrait Painter

**Address:** 32, Cavendish Square<sup>215</sup>

**Society Membership:** President of the Royal Academy; (SC) Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge;<sup>216</sup> Royal Society.<sup>217</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** from 1789-1845, Shee exhibited portraits at the Royal Academy (three hundred and twenty-four) and at the British Institute (nineteen).<sup>218</sup> From 1817-1820, exhibited at the Norwich Society of Artists.<sup>219</sup> Published *Alasco. A Tragedy in Five Acts* (1824); *Rhymes on art. or, the remonstrance of a painter* (c.1805).

**Additional Information:**

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<sup>212</sup> Dod *Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 160.

<sup>213</sup> Op cit.

<sup>214</sup> SC36, p. 126.

<sup>215</sup> Walkley *Artists' Houses in London* 1994, p. 24, p. 28. Number provided by University College London Archives 1834/5 Rough Minutes 17a (inside cover).

<sup>216</sup> University College London Archives 1834/5 Rough Minutes 17a (inside cover).

<sup>217</sup> Royal Society Archives – members list.

<sup>218</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 252.



## **Richard Lalor SHEIL<sup>220</sup>**

**MP for:** Tipperary County (Reformer)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 28, Margaret Street, London (D)

**Address (2):** Long Orchard, Tipperary (RP)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Formed the Catholic Association (with Daniel O’Connell & Sir Thomas Wyse).

**Publications:** “Has written several Tragedies, and formerly wrote much for different portions of the periodical press, among other things, a popular account of the proceedings of this deputation in the New Monthly Magazine”.<sup>221</sup>

**Additional Information:**

## **James SKENE**

**Witness on:** 21 August 1835

**Occupation:** Secretary of the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures in Scotland, also the secretary of the Royal Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland (SC).

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland (SC); Geological Society of London.<sup>222</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Charles Harriot SMITH**

**Witness on:** 10 August 1835

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<sup>219</sup> Mallilieu *The Norwich School* 1974, p. 79.

<sup>220</sup> His name is documented as Shiel in the Select Committee listings.

<sup>221</sup> *Dod Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 162.

<sup>222</sup> Geological Society of London – members list.

**Occupation:** Sculptor of architectural ornaments (SC)

**Address:** 5 Portland Place, Portland Road.<sup>223</sup>

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions/buildings:** sculpted detail on the National Gallery (SC).

**Additional Information:**

## **John Jobson SMITH**

**Witness on:** 27 July 1835

**Occupation:** Partner of the firm Stewart, Smith & Co., Sheffield.<sup>224</sup>

**Address:** Sheffield

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Samuel SMITH**

**Witness on:** 31 July 1835

**Occupation:** Partner of the firm Harding, Smith & Co., 82<sup>225</sup> Pall Mall (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Edward SOLLY**

**Witness on:** 12 July 1836

**Occupation:** Picture collector<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 361.

<sup>224</sup> Ornamental iron foundry (SC).



**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Benjamin SPALDING**

**Witness on:** 31 July 1835

**Occupation:** Buyer for Messrs. Harding, Smith & Co. in Paris (SC).

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Lord Viscount MAHON (Philip Henry Stanhope)**

**MP for:** Hertford Borough (Conservative)

**Occupation:**

**Address (1):** 12 Abermarle Street, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Chevening Park, Kent (WW)

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Carlton (D)

**Society Membership:** Royal Society.<sup>227</sup>

**Publications:** *A Life of Belisarius* (1829); *A History of the War of Succession in Spain* (1832); *A History of England from the Treaty of Utrecht to the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle* (1836).

**Additional Information:**

## **George STANLEY**

**Witness on:** 8 July 1836

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<sup>225</sup> Pigot & Co. *Metropolitan New Alphabetical Directory* 1828, p. 182.

<sup>226</sup> At that point, his collection was in the museum of Berlin (SC).

**Occupation:** Picture dealer, auctioneer (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Patrick Maxwell STEWART**

**MP for:** Lancaster Town (Reformer)

**Occupation:** Agent for Tabago, a director of the British American Land Company, director of the Palladium Life Assurance Company, manager of the London and Westminster Joint Stock (D).

**Address (1):** 11, Upper Brook Street, London (D)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Noel ST. LEON**

**Witness:** 10 March 1836

**Occupation:** Draftsman and pattern drawer (paper manufacturer) (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

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<sup>227</sup> Royal Society Archives – members list.



## **Robert T. STOTHARD**

**Witness:** 8 March 1836

**Occupation:** Draftsman and artist (SC), historical painter.<sup>228</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Fellow of the Society of Artists.<sup>229</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1821-1857 he exhibited eighteen paintings at the Royal Academy and two at the British Institute.<sup>230</sup>

**Additional Information:** Father of Thomas Stothard (SC)

## **Edward STRUTT\***

**MP for:** Derby (Reformer) (D)

**Occupation:** Cotton Manufacturer

**Address (1):** 17 Cork Street, London (PR)

**Address (2):** St. Helen's, Derby (D)

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Fellow of the Royal Society;<sup>231</sup> Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.<sup>232</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Strutt had a connection to the Lancastrian system of education.

“...[H]e trusted the London University would not only extend the means of instruction to a greater number of persons, but that it would also enlarge the limits within which a university education had been hitherto confined”.<sup>233</sup> 1803-13 Belper Round Mill began working in 1816.

“The massive stone-built Mill clearly owes much to the idea of the Panopticon of Samuel & Jeremy Bentham”.<sup>234</sup> 1823 First met Jeremy Bentham became an intimate associate of his.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 268.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., p. 268.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Royal Society Archives – members list.

<sup>232</sup> Knight *Pompeii* 1832, list of subscribers.

<sup>233</sup> Fitton & Wadsworth *The Strutts and the Arkwrights* 1964, p. 180

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p. 221

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p. 182

1825 Founded (with Joseph Strutt) Mechanics Institute at Derby.<sup>236</sup> He was a colleague of Robert Owen and his family connections go back to Owen's *New View of Society* (1813-14).<sup>237</sup> Was one of the Council of the University of London (D).

FITTON, R. S. (1964) & WADSWORTH, A. P. *The Strutts and the Arkwrights 1758-1830: a study of the early factory system.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

# T

## Charles Poulett THOMSON

**MP for:** Manchester Borough (Reformer)

**Occupation:** Was merchant in the city (D)

**Address (1):** 9 Somerset Place, London (D)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Friend of Jeremy Bentham.<sup>238</sup> Involved in the later School of Normal Design Committee.<sup>239</sup> Commisioner of Greenwich Hospital (D).

## Charles TOPLIS

**Witness on:** 31 August and 2 September 1835

**Occupation:** Vice-president of the London Mechanics' Institution, and director of the Museum of National Manufactures in Leicester Square (SC).<sup>240</sup>

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid., p. 186

<sup>237</sup> Markus *Buildings and Power* 1993, p. 286.

<sup>238</sup> Huch & Ziegler *Joseph Hume* 1975, p. 76.

<sup>239</sup> British Museum MS Add 31218 f. 59.



**Additional Information:** The Museum of National Manufactures had been on the site of the new National Gallery and was moved to Dr. Hunters house in Leicester Square, but this establishment shut down when the Polytechnic Institution opened.<sup>241</sup>

## **Charles Hanbury TRACY<sup>242</sup>**

**MP for:** Tewkesbury Borough (Whig) (PR)

**Occupation:** Family owned the Pontypool Ironworks.<sup>243</sup>

**Address (1):** 35 Dover Street, London (PR)

**Address (2):** Toddington Park and Manor, Gloucestershire<sup>244</sup>; Worcester, Gugynoy; Newtown, Montgomeryshire (D).

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/buildings:** In 1819-1840 he built Toddington house in Gloucestershire in the Gothic style.<sup>245</sup>

**Additional Information:** He was a Commissioner and judge on the competition for the new Houses of Parliament.<sup>246</sup>

BRITTON, J.	(1840) <i>Graphic Illustrations with Historical and Descriptive Accounts of Toddington, Gloucestershire, the seat of Lord Sudeley</i> . London: J. Britton.
JOHNSON, J.	(1989) <i>The Gloucestershire Gentry</i> . Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing.

## **W**

## **Gustave Friedrich WAAGEN**

**Witness on:** 27 July, 3 August 1835

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<sup>240</sup> See also Kusamitsu "Great Exhibitions before 1851" 1980, p. 71.

<sup>241</sup> Anon *Notes & Queries* 1850, Aug. 31, p. 211.

<sup>242</sup> The name is not apparently hyphenated at the time but only later, so it appears in this alphabetical list under T.

<sup>243</sup> Johnson *The Gloucestershire Gentry* 1989, p. 228. Hanbury-Tracy may not have been occupied in the Ironworks, but his income was still drawn from this source (Ibid., p. 237).

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., pp. 252-253. See Britton *Graphic Illustrations, with historical and descriptive accounts...* 1840.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

**Occupation:** Director of the Royal Gallery, Berlin (SC)

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

## **Henry Warburton**

**MP for:** Bridport Borough (Radical Reformer)

**Occupation:** A Baltic Merchant (D).

**Address (1):** 45 Cadogan Place, London (D)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Athenaeum, Free Trade, Reform (D).

**Society Membership:** Member of the Geological Society of London;<sup>247</sup> Royal Society.<sup>248</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Henry Warburton was Hume's 1832 Election campaign manager.<sup>249</sup>

"[A]vowed Benthamite...".<sup>250</sup> One of the Council of the University of London (D).

## **Samuel Wiley**

**Witness on:** 10 August 1835

**Occupation:** Representative of Jennens & Betteridge japanning company, Constitution Hill, Birmingham.<sup>251</sup>

**Address:**

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<sup>246</sup> 'Report of Commissioners appointed to consider the plans for building the houses of parliament' in *Catalogue of the Designs offered for the New Houses of Parliament, now exhibiting in the National Gallery* 1836.

<sup>247</sup> Geological Society of London – members list.

<sup>248</sup> Morrell & Thackray *Gentlemen of Science* 1984, p. 31.

<sup>249</sup> Huch & Ziegler *Joseph Hume* 1985, p. 77. See Henry Warburton in W section of 1835 Committee Member profiles.

<sup>250</sup> Op cit., p. 108.

<sup>251</sup> This firm is stated as Jennings & Betteridge in the Select Committee. See *Pigot & Co.'s Directory of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire & North Wales for 1828-9*, p. 796, p.800. For background see Dickinson *English Papier-Mâché* n.d., p. 18; DeVoe 1971, p. 43.



**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:**

## **John WILKS**

**MP for:** Boston Borough (Reformer)

**Occupation:** Solicitor (ceased to practice for some years) (D).

**Address (1):** 3 Finsbury Place, London (D)

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:** Trustee of the Westminster Club (WW).

**Society Membership:** Fellow of the Royal Society, Fellow of the Zoological Society, Honorary secretary to the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, member of the London Institute (WW).

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** "...[C]onsidered the organ of the Dissenters".<sup>252</sup>

## **William WILKINS**

**Witness on:** 1 July and 8 July 1836

**Occupation:** Architect

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:** Royal Academician.<sup>253</sup>

**Publications/exhibitions/buildings:** *The Civil Architecture of Vitruvius; comprising those Books which relate to the public and private Edifices of the Ancients* (1812). Wilkins translated it and

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<sup>252</sup> Dod *Parliamentary Pocket Companion* 1835, p. 176.

<sup>253</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Art* 1969, p. 303.

introduced it by writing ‘an historical view of the rise of progress of architecture amongst the Greeks’.<sup>254</sup>

## **William WILLIAMS**

**MP for:** Coventry City (Radical Reformer?) (WW)

**Occupation:** Merchant (WW, D)

**Address (1):** 12 Park Square, Regent’s Park, London (WW)

**Address (2):** Watling Street, Coventry (D)

**Clubs:** Reform (D)

**Society Membership:** Royal Society?<sup>255</sup>

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:** Member of the Common Council of London (D). Close associate of Joseph Hume and like him pressed continually for financial retrenchment. Reducing the size of the army and other ‘enormous establishments for the pauper families of the aristocracy’ was always a prominent feature of William’s election address in Coventry. He was also against the Corn Laws, newspaper stamp-duties – though he always emphasised that he was an Anglican. Above all, he stressed the need for further electoral reform: the secret ballot, household suffrage ‘at least’, limiting Parliaments to three years ‘at most’.<sup>256</sup>

## **Samuel WOODBURN**

**Witness on:** 8 July 1836

**Occupation:** Proprietor of collection of drawings originally made by Sir Thomas Lawrence “as the original designs of the great masters” (SC).<sup>257</sup>

**Address:** Park Lane, then Piccadilly. He also had a large country estate in Radnorshire.<sup>258</sup>

**Clubs:**

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<sup>254</sup> The book is referred to by W. R. Hamilton in his published letter to the Earl of Elgin concerning the New Houses of Parliament (Hamilton *Letter from W. R. Hamilton to the Earl of Elgin* 1836, p. 9 [note]).

<sup>255</sup> Royal Society Archives – members list.

<sup>256</sup> Searby *Coventry Politics in the Age of the Chartists* 1964, p. 10.

<sup>257</sup> This was a collection of Old Master drawing that was offered to the nation but was rejected by the government of the time. It was later dispersed although some of it was acquired by the Ashmolean in Oxford (Murray *The Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists* 1987, p. 226).



**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:**

**Additional Information:** “Together with his brother William, he was one of the most potent influences on English collecting...”.<sup>259</sup>

## **William WYON**

**Witness on:** 4 September 1835

**Occupation:** Chief engraver at the Royal Mint (SC).

**Address:**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications/exhibitions:** From 1812-1848, he exhibited eighty-four medals at the Royal Academy and one at the Old Water Colour Society.<sup>260</sup>

**Additional Information:** Wyon was interviewed for his knowledge of the manufacturing situation in Birmingham where he had lived for twenty years (according to the SC introduction). Came from a family of engravers from Birmingham, went to the Birmingham School and was then apprenticed to his father in Birmingham.<sup>261</sup> Went to London to stay with his uncle Thomas and from there developed a career as an engraver in the capital.<sup>262</sup>

CARLISLE, N. (1837) *memoir of the Life and Works of William Wyon Esq. ARA chief engraver of the Royal Mint*. London: W. Nicol.

## **Thomas WYSE\***

**MP for:** Waterford

**Occupation:** Lord of the Treasury, Secretary of the Board of Control (WW)

**Address (1):** 17 Wilton Place, London (WW)

**Address (2):** Manor of St. John, Nr. Waterford; Cuddegh, Queen's (WW)

**Clubs:** Brooks's, Reform (WW)

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<sup>258</sup> Denvir *High Victorian Design* 1984, pp. 310-311.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Graves *A Dictionary of Artists* 1969, p. 313.

<sup>261</sup> Carlisle *A Memoir of the Life and Works of William Wyon* 1837, pp. 31-32.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-38.

**Society Membership:** 1823 formed the Catholic Association; chairman of the Central Society of Education, set up in 1836;<sup>263</sup> Society for Promoting Practical Design;<sup>264</sup> Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.<sup>265</sup>

**Publications:** *Historical Sketch of the late Catholic Association of Ireland* (1829), *Ireland and O'Connell. A historical sketch of the condition of the Irish people, before the commencement of O'Connell's public career, a history of the Catholic Association etc., etc.* (1835).

**Additional Information:**

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**Eliot Thomas YORKE**

**MP for:** Cambridge County (Conservative)

**Occupation:** Barrister

**Address (1):** 7 King Street, St. James's, London (PR)?

**Address (2):**

**Clubs:**

**Society Membership:**

**Publications:**

**Additional Information:**

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<sup>263</sup> Roderick & Stephens *Education and Industry* 1978, p. 13.

<sup>264</sup> Bell *The Schools of Design* 1963, p. 74.

<sup>265</sup> University College London Archives – Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge Rough Minutes 1834/5 17a (inside cover).



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# Appendix 2: Précis of the Select Committee Proceedings of 1835-6

## Minutes of Evidence

27 July 1835 Dr. Gustave Friedrich Waagen, qq. 1-94, pp. 1-6.

Dr. Gustave Waagen is questioned about the *Gewerb-Institut* at Berlin and the *Gewerb-schools*, (design schools) in Breslau, Königsberg, Dantzic and Cologne which were set up, according to the witness, about twenty years prior to the present Select Committee. He is also questioned as to his theories of ways to extend a knowledge of art to the people, and this leads on to his ideas about art and museum collections.

Waagen claims he has little experience of the *Gewerb-schools* (which were preparatory design institutions) and so he gives a detailed account of the “chief Institut”, which offers more advanced studies into art as applied to manufacture. The *Gewerb-Institut* has collections of the newest technical inventions, of casts from Greek, Roman and Medieval sculpture, furniture, architectural models, as well as collections of patterns for textile manufacture. The students are instructed for two or three years, during which time they learn to draw, model, are instructed in elementary mathematics, chemistry and colour mixing, natural history, physiology, some architecture, and perspective. They are also instructed in manufacturing techniques, although here, Waagen only initially outlines

founding and casting metal.<sup>1</sup> Waagen implies that this specialised manufacturing instruction takes place after a first year of the more general foundational studies (listed before it). This specific industrial training may involve direct contact with manufacturers, he suggests, as the director of the Institut is in contact with industry.<sup>2</sup> In addition to these areas of study, students who show themselves to be talented in relation to the ‘higher branches of art’, can also take anatomical instruction at either the Berlin Academy of Arts, where it is free, or the University, where they pay fees. Otherwise, the students do not take life drawing, but draw from classical casts.

The instruction in all the institutions (Berlin and regions) is free and entirely paid for by the government (although students must fund their own board and lodgings). Students are chosen by the ‘Government-president’ but can be nominated by anyone, and this ‘talent spotting’ is perhaps possible due to the provision of drawing in all elementary schools. This, Waagen believes, provides a “tendency to exercise the eye of the people”.<sup>3</sup> Thus, educating them not only in producing art (in relation to manufactures), but also if a career in this area is not pursued, in wanting to possess works of art themselves.

When asked about the best way of continuing and extending this knowledge, Waagen suggests that having easily accessed public collections is the answer, although he claims that this should not be a case of simply housing any selection of art. Waagen suggests that the efficacy of collections to educate, relies on the discernment of a collection committee to select the best examples of taste, and to swap or sell bequeathed examples that are of inferior quality. He also considers the display and information about the paintings and sculptures to be essential. This should be done, he suggests, in a chronology that explains the process of technique through the different artistic schools, from master to pupil. This should

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<sup>1</sup> Though unlisted Waagen also comments that the cotton industry in particular has benefited from the education of students at the Institut (*SC* q. 46, p. 3).

<sup>2</sup> This was a man named Beuth (*SC* q 12, p. 1).



be expressed both through the physical grouping of paintings and sculptures and also in short catalogues and labelling, explaining the art's history. Thus the collections can be used for instruction.

**31 July 1835 Dr. Gustave Friedrick Waagen, q. 95, pp. 6-8.**

Waagen returns for apparently further questioning although this clearly takes the form of a prepared speech by the witness. This is evident by the length and detail of the 'answer'. In the previous evidence when asked how best to apply art to manufacture, Waagen had commented that "[i]n former times the artists were more workman, and the workmen were more artists".<sup>4</sup> His prepared statement seems to extend this historical information on art education by providing the committee with an outline of the master/apprentice system. The witness's main point is that the intimate relationship of master and student within a studio, historically provided the apprentice with the opportunity of "...seeing the practice, [and] of turning it to the best account in the different branches... for example, drawing, painting, modelling...".<sup>5</sup> This, he suggests, was an effective organic, homogenous system of educating artists. Waagen opposes this ideal with the growth of the academic system, where he reports that teaching was abstracted into categories and rules of composition. Drawing from the antique, from life, anatomy, painting and perspective, were all taught by separate tutors, none of whom had an interest in the students' progress. Furthermore, Waagen suggests, rules were not enough to produce great artists, since rules could not make up for the "mode of feeling" that the traditional painting masters taught their students: "If it possesses this "impress" of the artist's feeling, we overlook the possible defects in drawing and colour, as so many works of the ancient artists prove".<sup>6</sup> Instead, he notes, academies produced mediocre artists brought up on "the cold

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<sup>3</sup> SC q. 76, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> SC q. 80, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> SC q. 95, pp. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> SC q. 95, p. 7.

general rule”.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore academies are supported by the State and thus tend to have authority and influence, and dominate the art world. People, he argues, often judge art by the power an institution holds, rather than by the merit of the work.

Waagen therefore suggests that artists open their studios, while the academies still provide the basic rules of composition. In support of this, he offers the success of the sculptor Professor Rauch of Prussia.<sup>8</sup>

**3 August 1835 Dr. Gustave Friedrich Waagen, qq. 96-98, pp. 8-9.**

Waagen continues with a prepared series of statements. He is merely asked to advance any further ideas he has for extending “the knowledge of arts among the people”.<sup>9</sup> His ideas cover three further areas. Firstly exhibitions, where he outlines a system for charging a low entrance fee in order to pay artists for exhibiting their works. Importantly, he notes, the State should always be involved in the selection of art for exhibition, in order to prevent partiality. Secondly, he suggests there should be a more extensive policy on State collection of good examples of fine art. Again, he outlines mechanisms by which this has happened in Berlin.<sup>10</sup> Thirdly, he recommends that painters and not just artists should be employed on public buildings and suggests that the building of the new Houses of Parliament provides an ideal opportunity for this. By the employment of artists in this way, Waagen believes that there will be an improvement in British historical painting.

**27 July 1835, Mr. John Jobson Smith, qq. 99-160, pp. 9-13.**

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<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> However, he suggested that architecture must be wholly taught in an institution because of its variations and connections to craft trades. He gives the example of the *Bau-Academie* in Berlin (SC q. 95, p. 8).

<sup>9</sup> SC q. 96-98, pp. 8-9.

<sup>10</sup> “...a number of individuals about 10 years ago, under the patronage of the King, and the presidency of the Minister, Humboldt... had such success... with an annual subscription of 15s. the annual income is now 1,200/., by which means several meritorious artists find employment” (SC q. 97, p. 9).



Partner of a firm in Sheffield known as Stewart, Smith & Company, John Jobson Smith is involved in domestic iron manufacture, producing objects such as stoves and fenders. These have been considered the “finest specimens of iron manufacture” in Britain, by the sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey, with whom Smith appears to have a relationship through correspondence at least, on matters of design.<sup>11</sup> Most of Smith’s questioning relates to the problems of manufacturers employing designers when there is no system of protection through copyright for three-dimensional objects (although the design may be copyrighted when still on paper). When patterns are not under any legal copyright system, he describes the futility of having trained designers. The moment an item goes into production, it is copied almost exactly (but at a lower standard of manufacture) and sold cheaper, rivalling the higher quality, but more expensive, original.<sup>12</sup> He suggests that there should be a central register office for copyright of patterns (at either the National Gallery or Somerset House) that is open to the public. This system should cover designs for up to three or four years.

When asked whether there had been an improvement in public taste and the reasons for it, Smith replies that it is due to the spread of superior interior and exterior plaster work. When questioned as to whether he does not attribute some of this improvement to the spread of French taste, he says that he does, and that France has had an influence on ornamentation particularly. However, he believes that iron work is far superior in Britain and his firm has no links with France in terms of exports.

The questioning returns to the ‘designers’ in his own firm and these, Smith claims, are simply men of natural talent who have not been trained, but are interested in art and design. Although he admits that there are works of design at

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<sup>11</sup> *SC* q. 104, pp. 9-10.

<sup>12</sup> “A capitalist will not purchase the higher order of talent, because no sooner does he produce it than it is stolen from him” (*SC* q. 138, p. 11).

the local Mechanics Institute in Sheffield, he comments that these are not accompanied by any instruction in the processes of design. He therefore believes that it would be a good thing “to extend the means of instruction in design among the people”.<sup>13</sup> However, Smith notes that there is an entire series of steps in manufacture and that design education (and high wages) could not stop simply with the designer, but must also extend to the modeller and then to those workmen carrying out the production of the design as it has been interpreted by the modeller.

The questioner suggests that copyright might actually prevent good design from being seen and bought around Britain, because fewer objects would be produced and less people would therefore experience them. Smith replies that this is unlikely as, for example, his firm visit every English town twice a year so that everyone has a chance to see the designs. Furthermore, the situation is such that there are only two or three artists producing designs for iron work in the whole country and so most firms do not have an artist in-house. A designer’s influence is thus country-wide. But in conclusion to his evidence, he agrees with the questioner who suggests that it may become difficult to judge an original design, or ‘distinct pattern’, as opposed to simply a variation on a ‘previous pattern’. However, Smith determines that “[t]here would be so much of the particular mind and style of the artist, as to fairly constitute an original”.<sup>14</sup>

**30 July 1835, James Morrison, Esq. MP, qq. 161-269, pp. 13-21.**

James Morrison, who is an MP for Ipswich and a member of the Select Committee, is questioned regarding his experience and opinion of British manufacture in comparison to that produced on the Continent. His credentials to answer these questions lie in his owning the import-export firm James Morrison & Company, and having travelled abroad frequently for more than twenty years.

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<sup>13</sup> SC q. 133, p. 11.



Morrison states that “I have found generally that we have been very much superior to foreign countries in respect of general manufacture, but greatly inferior in the art of design” and he relates this particularly to the fancy trades, such as silk manufacture, woollens, metal and architectural detailing.<sup>15</sup> This view is not simply a personal one, but has been expressed to him on many occasions by French manufacturers. In France, the emphasis is much more on design.

This contrast between Britain and other countries is due, he believes, to there being educational institutions that teach design and its connection to manufacture, while in Britain there is no such system. He notes that the Royal Academy and other private teaching schools in London, focus their instruction on the human figure and train “people for painters and sculptors, rather than as artists for manufacture”.<sup>16</sup> So although in Britain there are workers who are called ‘designers’, they are actually untrained in ‘the principles of art’. Furthermore, according to Morrison, British manufacturers have only improved design by relying on the purchase of new patterns from the Continent.

The relationship of architectural design, interior design and furniture is then explored in questioning. Morrison states that the connection has been made since the books of Mr. Bullock and Mr. Hope<sup>17</sup> and that this would further be advanced if a school were to be established that taught form, proportion and ornament. However, he comments, that such a school would only be of benefit to manufacture if “this advantage would not be confined to the manufacturer of furniture, but ... would be extended to the country at large, because it would give employment to many, as well as be an improvement to the public taste”.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> SC q. 158, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> SC qq. 166-167, p. 13; qq. 177-181, p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> SC q. 170, pp. 13-14.

<sup>17</sup> Outline details of these. Is Bullock perhaps the guide to the Museum, the contents of which were displayed in the Great Room in Piccadilly in 1811 (*A companion to Mr. Bullock's Museum, containing a brief description of upwards of ten thousand natural & foreign curiosities, antiquities... etc.*)

<sup>18</sup> SC q. 182, p. 14.

Associated with this line of questioning, Morrison is asked about the adoption of the designs from Pompeii (classical style) in interiors, but the Member of Parliament believes that although these designs are always part of forming taste, they are not necessarily “suitable to our habits”.<sup>19</sup> Morrison concedes however that new buildings such as the Lyceum Theatre are drawn from the classical as is the ‘Arabesque Style’ (particular to Pompeii) which is prevalent in Paris and Italy.

The questioning turns to Italy and the diffusion of the influence of high art there. Morrison notes that there is a general sense that the Italians as a whole, possess an understanding, a ‘feeling’, for art that is lacking in Britain. He believes that this knowledge of art on the Continent is based on the availability of collections of fine works of art for viewing by the working classes in particular. He notes later that in comparison, the collections of the British Museum and the National Gallery, are unavailable to this same audience in London, being closed on the only day that the working classes could visit them.

In response to a question concerning colour, Morrison notes that British design is lacking in all aspects of education, including chemistry. In France, there are manufacturing professors such as Clement Desormes, who may be consulted regarding questions of chemistry such as colour improvement and application.

It is his belief then, that the only way to answer this general paucity of knowledge, is to initially have a central school in London (as the city has a ready supply of collections of fine art), in which to train teachers, then, in turn, to have provincial schools staffed by these graduates. Morrison’s ideas are based on a long-standing interest in establishing such a school in which he and other men, such as Lord Brougham, have been involved for some time. He is also aware of a petition presented to the Government regarding the need for an education in

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<sup>19</sup> SC q. 183, pp. 14-15.



design by the ribbon manufacturers of Foleshill, near Coventry.<sup>20</sup> However Morrison believes that the Government should not necessarily be in charge of the education system, but should supply an initial grant to which local subscriptions could be added. He notes that there is neither a lack of interest (in London or the big manufacturing towns), nor a lack of talent – but in his opinion, there is simply a want of education in relation to manufactures.

On the lack of copyright, Morrison believes that this factor alone is preventing the growth of good design in Britain. Despite manufacturers showing that there is always a market for good design (no matter what the expense) they are reluctant to employ fine artists because these expensively-produced patterns will be pirated immediately. Therefore there must be copyright, possibly varying from six months to three years, depending on the goods. When asked what system this should be, Morrison rejects the suggestion of local tribunals made up of labourers and masters. He does not believe that labourers would have the appropriate knowledge to judge on the authenticity and originality of a pattern (even after undergoing an education like the one he suggested).<sup>21</sup>

The questioning moves on generally to the taste of the British nation from the upper to the lower classes of society. Morrison believes that relatively speaking, all aspects of society have little understanding of art and are therefore lacking in taste. This he suggests is due to a basic absence of an elementary education in art and the principles of design.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, he notes some form of early drawing instruction would be easier to introduce into Britain since the manufacturing base is so strong. However, he does note an improvement in taste in cities like Liverpool and Birmingham in particular, while in London he attributes the improvement to the exhibitions in the British Institution, the National Gallery and to street architecture. When later asked to comment on street architecture

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<sup>20</sup> See George Eld's evidence for more details.

<sup>21</sup> This is despite being reminded of the improvement on a French design discovered by a Paisley hand-loom weaver (SC q. 237, pp. 18-19).

however, he is still unsure of the standards of it, although recent work has been a marked improvement. Furthermore, when asked whether those in charge of commissioning public architecture should be knowledgeable in its principles, he answers that he does.

He also attributes the improvement of taste to the introduction of French design (with the exception of the Louis Quatorze style). Through this, not only has taste improved, but also manufacture; by copying the patterns from the Continent, there is less importation of foreign goods and a growing use of British manufacturers. The way that knowledge and taste is extended is not precisely known by Morrison however, and when questioned whether an uneducated man could still benefit from an exhibition of fine art, he states that "...such exhibitions produce, perhaps insensibly, very considerable effects; they operate, directly or indirectly on the public mind, and I have no doubt diffuse benefits through all the different grades in society".<sup>23</sup>

Morrison is also asked to comment on whether modelling, in addition to drawing is an important part of education. In response, he notes that the teaching of modelling is a very necessary part of instruction, and that the Institute of British Architects are proposing to establish its teaching.

**31 July 1835, Mr. Samuel Smith, qq. 270- 299, pp 21-23.**

Mr. Samuel Smith is from Harding, Smith and Co. of Pall Mall, a firm dealing with fancy goods. He has had much experience of French manufacture and considers it superior in design. Design is given a great deal of importance in France. While by contrast, British design is apparently given little emphasis, and this deficiency is revealed by the lack of artists and schools of design.

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<sup>22</sup> "[T]he use of the pencil cannot be introduced too early" (SC q. 249, p. 20).

<sup>23</sup> SC q. 262, p. 20.



Smith reports that around January and July, his business is visited by French manufacturing agents who supply at least 200 designs for the next season, the majority of which are already manufactured materials and not simply in pattern books. In comparison, he receives little or no agents from British manufacturers. If he does, they show an “indifferent paper drawing”, but they are usually calling not to supply initially, but to find out what the French manufacturers have produced for the following season.<sup>24</sup>

In terms of sales, Smith outlines the basic amounts of French versus British goods. In fancy silks, that are highly patterned, the origin of goods is almost all French, while as the goods get plainer, the ratio favours British manufacturers. Where ribands are sold, these are again almost exclusively French, as are shawl sales. Smith notes how the Scottish shawl trade (based in Edinburgh and Paisley) has been adversely affected by the increase in French shawl imports within the last four to five years. However, the changes are due to the superiority of French goods in terms of “pattern and design”,<sup>25</sup> where the French shawls have responded to, and created, new fashions.

In answer to whether he knows about the processes of French manufacture of shawls he responds by submitting a section of text from a work entitled *L'Industrie; Recueil de Traités, Elémentaires sur l'Industrie Française et Etrangère*. Smith notes that if a manufacturer wanted a new pattern, then he would apply to professional designers like those he has come across in Paris.

**31 July 1835 Mr. Benjamin Spalding, qq. 300-330, pp. 23-25**

Mr. Benjamin Spalding, a buyer for Harding & Smith in Paris, is called in to give evidence in the presence of Mr. Samuel Smith. He is first asked how a French

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<sup>24</sup> SC q. 282, p. 22.

manufacturer, in need of a new pattern would go about procuring one. He notes that the manufacturer would simply be able to apply to any number of designers who could produce a pattern. Furthermore, approaching these designers is particularly beneficial to a manufacturer, because they are aware of the *practical* application of the pattern. Thus, as the questioner notes in q. 303 “[i]n France, the manufacturer has also this advantage, that his practical manufacturer, who makes the drawing, is also a well-educated artist”.<sup>26</sup> By contrast Spalding notes that, although there are pattern designers in England, it is difficult to get a pattern. The reason being, contrary to the practical knowledge of the French designer, an English pattern designer, is not “...sufficiently acquainted with putting the work into the loom”.<sup>27</sup> Thus in addition to an inferiority in design skills generally, English pattern designers are also lacking in practical knowledge.

In the presence of Spalding, Smith is asked to comment on colour and he notes (through questioning) that the lack of design knowledge his colleague has referred to, also extends to colour usage, although less so in actual colour manufacture. He notes that French dyes have a luminosity that is seemingly consistent over the whole spectrum of colours, but that they do not possess the permanence of British dyes. Again the contrast appears to be in the application of technology where the French are adventurous in design, though perhaps less successful in basic qualities of production. Thus they may not produce long-lasting fabrics but “...produce new shawls of colours that would not have been thought of in England”,<sup>28</sup> and create and respond to fashion.

Smith is further questioned regarding his knowledge of the manufacture of a silk and woollen mixed material. He knows of its existence and comments that most of these fabrics have patterns that are printed, rather than constructed in the weaving. He goes on to note that the company of Harding & Smith do not import

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<sup>25</sup> SC q. 292, p. 22.

<sup>26</sup> SC q. 303, p. 23.

<sup>27</sup> This he applies specifically to silk and shawl manufacture (SC q. 306, p. 24).



fancy articles from any other nation, besides France, although there is a small tally of imported and exported goods between them and German suppliers.

Finally, both witnesses are asked if they have any further comments relating to the establishment of “some schools of design, or ... some other similar means... to instruct the British manufacturing artists”.<sup>29</sup> Smith replies that he feels the British manufacturer is capable of producing and selling the same quality of fabrics (at the same cost), if only there were designers capable. In addition, he comments that this view has previously been objected to by certain people who have considered that the public buy French designs simply because they are French. Smith denies this, and believes alternatively that this purchase of French goods has occurred because the designs were the finest. To sum up, Smith is asked to comment on the areas that have been particularly affected by this lack of design education, and he notes that it is especially evident in riband and shawl manufacture.

Mr. Spalding is finally asked his opinion, in the light of previous comments, of glove manufacture. He notes that as in fancy goods, the French are superior in the design of gloves and this is due, he believes, to an in-depth knowledge they have of the shape and structure of the hand.

**3 August 1835, Thomas James Esq., qq. 331-357, pp. 25-27**

Thomas James is a partner in a London wholesale textiles business, buying from silk and cotton manufacturers in Spitalfields and Manchester. James comments that there has been an improvement in English design and public taste (particularly in relation to colours) since the importation of French goods. He notes that when the textile manufacturers from Manchester and Macclesfield come to London to buy silk in East India House, they also stop off at his

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<sup>28</sup> SC q. 314, p. 24.

business and study the range of shades and patterns from France, so as to advance their own fabric designs. He has noticed a marked improvement in figured silks (materials that have more complex patterning) and this is supported by an American order for such goods, received by a manufacturer in Spitalfields.

However, James believes that there is definitely room for greater improvement in British textile design, and he suggests that one of the main ways of achieving this is to create some copyright to protect woven patterns for three months (printed patterns already having protection). He believes that the French example provides an indication of the best way to proceed and has drawn upon Dr. Bowring's evidence on the matter. Rather than going into detail about the scheme, James provides another example of the improvement of British manufacture and public taste by discussing the transfer of handkerchief sales to Britain, and away from India.

The witness goes on to note (drawn to the subject by questioning) that although plain, coloured silks and velvets were at first (after the ban) imported from France, this trade has ceased to be the case almost entirely, and British manufacture is now favoured. However again this improvement, he believes, is still based on the initial exposure of British firms to superior French design. It is this strong French influence that James believes needs to be ultimately improved upon. He states: "In our figured patterns we borrow very largely from the French. It is very desirable that we should create an original taste here..."<sup>30</sup> Mr. James concludes by stating that the French superiority in design will be short-lived and that British design will overtake it.

**3 August 1835 Mr. Thomas Field Gibson, qq. 358-412, pp. 27-30**

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<sup>29</sup> SC q. 322, p. 24.

<sup>30</sup> SC q. 354, p. 27.



Mr. Gibson is a silk and velvet manufacturer in Spitalfields and he is initially asked whether he agrees with Thomas James's opinion that British textile manufacture has improved. He does agree and also states that since 1826, when French silks were first introduced, the improvement has occurred (later noting that this is the sole reason). Thus he is in agreement not only with the idea of an improvement, but also with the cause of that advancement.

He is asked about the invention of the Jacquard loom in 1832 and whether it has also influenced the British, Gibson suggests in answer to this, that there has been only an indirect influence.

The manufacturer is then asked to present the designs that his company are currently producing. They are not made using a Jacquard loom nor are they British designs, but they are copied almost entirely from French fabrics. Gibson comments that "[w]e are almost destitute of original taste" in the production of patterns.<sup>31</sup> He then describes the type of person who 'designs' and copies patterns as not being "...of any education, and very little cultivation of taste". When asked to detail the pattern drawers salary he states that they can generally earn between £ 100 and £ 200, but that this wage covers both costs of designing and also applying the pattern to the loom during production. This is different from the French manufacturing process where the role of designer and mechanic (someone who cuts the card, in the case of the Jacquard loom) are split. However, the witness does not believe that the cutter of the card has to be an artist.

Gibson identifies two areas that are a hindrance to the manufacturer. Firstly he pinpoints the lack of copyright on patterns. Thus no matter what expense the initial investment for designing is, the pattern may be copied, and the copyists receive no punishment. His second reason for British design inferiority is that "...we have no national taste in this department of art... we have no originality in

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<sup>31</sup> SC q. 365, p. 27.

design in drawing of patterns... we are compelled to make copies from French patterns in order to supply the demands of our customers".<sup>32</sup> Thus, because he sees these two problems as of equal importance, he states that it is only worthwhile having a school of design if there was also a scheme established for the protection of patterns. While on the subject of education, he also affirms the role of galleries to educate the taste of the public, particularly in relation to colour.

When asked in more detail about copyright on patterns he suggests that, contrary to the already established protection of printed cottons, patterns would need to be protected for at least twelve months. As support for this view, he gives an example of a case in which he had a pattern designed for spring that was then used in the winter season, in an alternative colourway. However, the pattern was copied in Manchester, was supplied cheaper and he lost out on the sale. Gibson thus recommends a heavy fine for piracy, combined with a cheap and prompt application process for the victim. The patterns could be stamped/marked and then registered in a simple procedure.

As a conclusion to his questioning, Gibson is asked whether there are any 'superior weavers' in Britain, as there are in France (and particularly Lyons). The witness states that there are no weavers of this type, because it is the manufacturer and not the designer, who owns the machinery. Led by the questioner, Gibson therefore admits that the process of experimentation when actually weaving (whereby "...after the design has been produced, the weaver introduces a considerable modification into the pattern itself"<sup>33</sup>), that is afforded by the French system, is therefore impossible in British production.

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<sup>32</sup> SC q. 380, p. 28.

<sup>33</sup> SC qq. 411-412, p. 30.



**3 August 1835 Mr. John Howell and Mr. Robert Butt, qq. 413-454, pp. 30-33**

Mr. Howell and Mr. Butt are interviewed together, having heard the previous witness's testimony. Mr. Howell is a partner of Howell & James of Regent Street, and Mr. Butt is the manager of the bronze and porcelain department of the same establishment.

Firstly Mr. Howell is asked to supply any information regarding patterns that he deems appropriate. He begins by responding to a question asked of Mr. Gibson and discusses the usual way in which Howell & James acquire patterns. In Spring and Autumn, the Lyons manufacturers visit his firm with between 200 and 300 printed silk, gauze (and other fabric) patterns; these are already produced and are not simply on paper. If Howell & James are strongly interested in a particular pattern, they will ask the French manufacturers to withdraw the design from general supply, so that they alone can sell it.

This purchasing process he contrasts to that which his firm undergoes when approached by an English manufacturer. British companies will not put a pattern into production simply to produce a sample as they believe it is too costly, yet as Howell notes the realisation of a fabric is essential to the selection process. From paper, it is virtually impossible to judge the success or otherwise of a particular pattern. He goes on to complain that if his company wish to see a certain pattern from any British manufacturer *in production*, they have to pay for this cost and also ask for a designer.

Howell goes on to specify the differences between a pattern-drawer and designer, while noting that there is a similar deficiency of both in England. A designer is the creator of the pattern in the initial instance, while a pattern-drawer according to Howell, is the person who "puts it [the design] to work",<sup>34</sup> i.e. sets up the loom

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<sup>34</sup> SC q. 417, p. 31.

to produce the designed pattern. This he suggests is in the same way as "...an architect gives a drawing to the builder".<sup>35</sup> He further describes the system by noting that "...the pattern-drawer is the medium between the designer and the weaver".<sup>36</sup>

When asked whether he considers French figured and fancy goods to be superior to British manufacture, he replies that he noticed a superiority of French production when first seeing goods after the lifting of the importation ban. However, he believes that this is due particularly to the high quality of raw material that the French possess, especially in the case of silk. He then suggests that because British manufacturers are importing French silk, then they are beginning to catch up with the French in terms of quality. However, when asked simply to judge French versus British manufacture in terms of *design* alone, he admits that French design remains superior. But he also suggests that this superiority is not as widespread as may be presumed in France; Howell & James for example, deal with only one house in Lyons. He is then drawn to discuss schools of design in France and agrees with the questioner that it is because of their existence, that that country boasts good design.

Howell is then questioned regarding whether his firm copies French patterns and he claims that they do, making very few changes. Thus if he had bought patterns from France, and required new stock, he would apply to a manufacturer in Spitalfields to get the designs copied and produced.

When asked whether he believes that extending a knowledge of design is important, he suggests that it is, but only if it is coupled with the extension of copyright laws. Having listened to Mr. Gibson's testimony, Howell suggests that he believes six months to be a long enough period of protection and that by

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<sup>35</sup> SC q. 419, p. 31.

<sup>36</sup> SC q. 421, p. 31.



“...stamping the name on the end of the piece, added to registering”, the system would work successfully.<sup>37</sup>

The questioning then moves on to the riband and shawl trades where Howell is asked his opinion. Howell claims that riband manufacture in Britain has mixed success, and then goes on to discuss shawl production in more detail. Having seen examples of French shawl design in France, he notes how much emphasis the French put on the design of those goods, noting that a Cachmere (Indian) shawl can be sold for between £300-£400 simply because of its patterning. In all aspects of production – manufacture, colour combination and design – Howell believes French shawls to be superior to that produced from the same materials in Britain. In conclusion Mr. Howell notes that the French have both better machinery and better skills to produce materials, showing the committee an example of the work of De la Rue & Company, Bunhill Row.<sup>38</sup>

### **3 August 1835 Mr. Robert Harrison, qq. 455-481, pp. 33-34**

Mr. Robert Harrison, from the silk manufacturers Brydges, Campbell and Harrison is questioned.<sup>39</sup> His experience comes from over twenty years in textile manufacture, and in answering, he therefore refers specifically to his own knowledge of the silk industry.

Harrison claims that the British are inferior in designs and patterns in the fancy silk trade because there is no one to design correctly for weaving:

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<sup>37</sup> SC q. 440, p. 32.

<sup>38</sup> Thomas De La Rue was one of two colour printers in London. He was particularly concerned with printing playing cards and his firm designed both the back and front of them. However De La Rue also moved into printing ‘paper hangings’ (Houseman *The House that Thomas Built* 1968, p. 36).

<sup>39</sup> Brydges, Campbell, Harrison and Lloyd, 19 Friday Street, London (Higgins ‘The Spitalfields Silk Industry in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century’ 1989, p. 18).

...the principle difficulty arises from the circumstances of men not having been brought up in this country to design for silk; it is very different to designing for printers, from the circumstance that it is necessary a man should be conversant with the principle of weaving, before he can make a proper design for silk. If we could only get designs in this country, we should be able to find parties that could put them on ruled paper for weaving.<sup>40</sup>

Harrison states that, although there is no lack of design talent in Britain, because there is not a school that teaches *applied* design (i.e. patterns for specific trades such as silk), then this integrated system of design and production, is limiting British manufacture. Thus he comments that “I feel satisfied we could make anything in this country, provided we had proper designers, parties to make drawings, and put the drawings upon ruled paper ready for cutting of the cards”.<sup>41</sup>

In the light of this desperate need for knowledgeable designers, he claims that he has tried to engage such professionals from France, but that because he is sure they have enough work in their own country and do not need to come to Britain for work, he has been unsuccessful. He would however, have no reservations about employing such designers. He supports this by showing some patterns that were drawn in Paris and that have been easily produced on the loom.

Mr. Harrison is asked about the production and success of colours in Britain in comparison to France and in response he claims that the British are superior in dye production. Qualifying this, he notes that the French have a brilliancy in their colouring which he attributes to their climate and water, but that British colouring is more permanent. Therefore since he claims that, to be a good dyer one has to

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<sup>40</sup> SC q. 459, p. 33.

<sup>41</sup> SC q. 467, p. 34.



have a “perfect chemical knowledge”, then he intimates that this branch of British manufacture is of a high standard.<sup>42</sup>

Ultimately, Harrison believes that there should be a school of design that will teach the applied knowledge that he has previously referred to. He believes that this would be good for industry, and that there would be a lot of interest amongst the working populace, and that such an education would provide them with a lucrative career.

Finally, the questioner asks Mr. Harrison about pattern copyright, and he notes that it is important that there be a system in place. His firm has been the victim of the lack of it previously, having purchased a bad copy of their own design from a company in Spitalfields. However, he does not remain convinced of the system proposed by the questioner, as he notes that if a piece was marked, it would be easy to remove the record of registration simply by cutting it off.

(Mr. Butt is apparently not questioned in this instance but appears again on 7 August 1835).

**7 August 1835 Mr. George Eld, qq. 482-534, pp. 35-37**

Mr. George Eld is the mayor of Coventry and employed in the corn trade. He is a native of the area and has lived in Foleshill, which is three miles from that town, for the last twenty years.

Eld has made a study of the riband trade that almost exclusively dominates the working lives of the Foleshill community. He claims that although there are around 7 000 people working in that trade in Foleshill, only about six have any knowledge of art or design. This ignorance seems to stem from the lack of

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<sup>42</sup> SC q. 473, p. 34.

instruction in the principles of design in that area. Thus despite there being a drawing class at the Mechanics Institute in Coventry, its influence is minimal, providing only elementary drawing classes (not design applied to manufacture) to subscription holders alone.

When questioned, Eld describes how the manufacturers and workers in Foleshill had presented a petition to Parliament, highlighting the need for some form of design education in the area. This he suggests had become a matter of urgency for that trade since the influx of superior French ribands. The lifting of the importation ban "...has forced upon them the conviction that they [the Foleshill manufacturers and workers] must adopt the same means of cultivating a better taste".<sup>43</sup> Through questioning, Eld proposes that there should be a school established, that would teach design *in relation to manufacture*. He stresses that only this type of applied design instruction would be valuable as a "...mere drawing school would be of very little use".<sup>44</sup>

Though certain that there is no lack of natural talent amongst the workers, at present Eld notes that there is no encouragement for this ability. There are no public art collections in either Foleshill or Coventry, no museum of patterns, no collections of machines, no botanical resources or chemical instruction.

Another issue that Eld raises is that Foleshill is only a small village that could not perhaps support a school, particularly if that school demanded an element of financial support from local residents. However, he notes that Coventry could support a design establishment that was partly subscribed and partly funded by the Government. He suggests that a school such as Bablake,<sup>45</sup> could be adapted to teach manufacture and design, though at present the arts are not taught in any charity schools. When directed by questioning, Eld agrees that it would be a good

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<sup>43</sup> SC q. 495, p. 35. In Pigot's 1835 edition there are 77 riband manufacturers listed but only one listed in the Foleshill area, Joseph French (p. 592).

<sup>44</sup> SC q. 500, p. 36.



idea to establish a central committee that would provide not only basic design principles, on which design schools for manufacture should be established, but also a central, normal school (in London) that could educate design teachers, in preparation to work in the provinces.

Finally Eld is asked about copyright and he states that, although he has not given the system of copyright much thought, it would seem an essential part of transforming design in Britain, and must come in addition to design education. He also responds favourably to the suggestion that copyright could be managed through a tribunal of masters and workmen.

**7 August 1835 Mr. Robert Butt, qq. 535-618, pp. 37-43**

Mr. Butt has been in the company of Howell & James on Regent Street for two years. However he is very experienced in the importation and sale of porcelain and bronze, having worked in London in the same trade since his youth. Butt is asked to assess the relative strengths in production and design of the manufacture of ornamental goods in France and Britain. He reports that in metallic manufacture, Britain is superior to France in the areas of silver, gold, jewellery and castings in iron, but in all other areas, the French have the better quality manufacture. Again in porcelain ware, Butt notes that, with the exception of Dresden style porcelain,<sup>45</sup> the French are again much superior to the British manufacturers in design. When asked how Britain can be good at design in one area and not in another, Butt notes that in luxury items where sale prices are high, manufacturers can afford to pay for artists to supply the design or model of their goods. This changes when objects are less expensive to sell, then the French he deems, design better for the more inexpensive objects on the market. Thus they appear to have a ready supply of good designers who ask lower prices for designing.

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<sup>45</sup> This was Bablake Free School on Hill Street (Pigot 1835, p. 592).

After some qualification of his opinions about areas in which the British and the French excel, Butt is asked what he attributes the general superiority of French design to. He answers: "To the facilities afforded to persons of all classes in France for acquiring a knowledge of the art of design, and the corresponding difficulty to any but persons of comparative independence of obtaining similar instruction in England".<sup>47</sup> Although Mr. Butt is unable to give details of the instruction that the French workmen undergo, he does refer to what he has heard about the institutions, and also what he sees in relation to the finished products. He notes that there is a depth of knowledge within the French workforce that allows them to understand the construction of figures of people and animals (in particular) in a way that is not available to the British worker. Thus even if French makers do not model and design themselves, they are "...enabled to finish works executed from the models of others with superior accuracy, so as to give them their proper articulation and feeling...".<sup>48</sup> He notes that in comparison, British knowledge of art and taste is much inferior, in all classes except the upper.

He is questioned regarding the state of manufacture in other countries and he notes that Germany is equally as inferior to Britain in design, except the iron works in Berlin.

When asked how he would improve the manufacturing situation in Britain, Butt suggests that an independent school of design should be established that taught design and modelling not in relation to painting and sculpture, but to manufactures. This would allow the British workforce to have the same ability as the French, if not to create designs, at least to finish them with feeling and sophistication. Furthermore, he suggests that a school should be accompanied by a system whereby manufacturers should employ workers who were both clerks

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<sup>46</sup> Porcelain with raised flower ornament (SC q. 545, p. 38).

<sup>47</sup> SC q. 565, p. 39.

<sup>48</sup> SC q. 567, p. 39.



and apprentice designers. Thus they would acquire knowledge of design both by working in-house, as well as obtaining a more formal education. He relates this approach to the process already established by architectural businesses. Mr. Butt goes on to suggest that providing a school, or schools of this 'popular plan', would also aid the higher forms of art. At present a fine art education involves a private master, an individually organised period of time where the candidate draws from the antique at the British Museum and only then, can there be an application to the Royal Academy. This process is very costly to the individual. Thus, he suggests, a general elementary education in the arts may aid those who have a talent in the area at less cost to themselves.

The questioning then refers to other avenues by which the working classes could gain a knowledge of art and design, and this Butt agrees could take place in museums or exhibitions in areas where schools were established. The witness is most in favour of a museum being attached to an actual design institution. He foresees how a collection of casts (antique busts and statues), vases, candelabra, gems and coins, would provide an excellent resource for students. He also notes that this could be opened to the public, provided it did not hinder the students' studies.

Mr. Butt is then asked about his opinion of existing copyright laws. He states that they are not extensive enough as they only protect designs including human and animal figures or part figures. Thus other decorative features are not protected. In further discussing copyright, he notes several details: Firstly the law is understood as "...the exclusive privilege of making copies or casts from that model, which a manufacturer may purchase from an artist".<sup>49</sup> Protection of a model lasts initially for fourteen years (and then an additional fourteen years if the artist who created it is still alive). This time scale he believes is appropriate for what are often slow selling articles. Butt then attempts to explain the exact

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<sup>49</sup> SC q. 598, pp. 41-42.

laws, but comments “[i]t is very difficult to ascertain the true construction to be put upon the words “being matter of invention in sculpture”, but my opinion is that they would not extend to guarantee the copyright of any model of scroll works, &c. cast in metal”.<sup>50</sup> To illustrate how this makes the law deficient, the witness uses the example of the gates to Buckingham Palace (Hyde Park). Although beautiful work, it is non-figurative and thus all but the animals of the Royal coat of arms remain unprotected by copyright; the designs may be copied without any fear of punishment. Thus, although designers believe that the copyright for human and animal figures is sufficient, they do not believe that this law is adequate as “...protection should be extended to all original models whether representing any object in nature, or being mere fanciful designs”.<sup>51</sup>

He outlines his ideas for patents as follows: Mr. Butt believes that there should be repositories for new designs in all the major towns in Britain. As well as depositing the design, the artist must sign a statement assuring the authorities that the pattern is indeed an original of which he or she is the author. Rather than casts which are stamped with the name and date of the author (these, the witness claims, would spoil small objects), he proposes a system where each design is assigned a number. This would be accompanied with a letter, indicating the city of origin, e.g. A for London, B for Manchester, C for Birmingham. Using this alphabet, as well as the Roman and Italian (and also lower and upper case), Butt believes that 124 towns could be represented. The key for these marks would then be advertised to the public. It is similar to a system in France although the alphabetical labelling is the witness’s own scheme. Again the difficulties regarding the subtleties of copyright are hinted at – how can one truly judge when a pattern is completely original and therefore worthy of copyright protection?

In conclusion, Mr. Butt is asked to compare French and British jewellery. He claims that expensive British jewellery is superior to that produced in France,

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<sup>50</sup> SC q. 595, p. 41.



however, as the goods become more imitative and lower in cost, so the French begin to take the upper hand in design.

**10 August 1835 Mr. Charles Harriott Smith, qq. 619-682, pp. 43-46**

Mr. Smith is a sculptor specialising in architectural ornament, who took on his father's profession and therefore has a long-standing acquaintance with the trade. The type of work Smith undertakes is principally in stone and marble. An example of this interior work might be marble monuments for churches or ornate fireplaces. Examples of exterior work would be the stone capitals of columns and other ornaments, such as the new National Gallery exterior, which he is currently working on. As these examples suggest, the work tends not to be figurative.

When asked whether he has difficulty in procuring assistants for this work, he states that he does not, although workers have varying experience, and he pays them depending on these abilities between £ 2 and £ 3 a week. He notes that there are only a few private schools and Mechanics Institutes that supply instruction to such artizans, and believes that it would be desirable to have a more comprehensive system of instruction. Smith notes that although his work is usually directed by architects and therefore does not demand invention from his assistants (and rarely design from himself), the skills required can vary from the 'mechanical' to "...trophies...[and]... draperies".<sup>52</sup> He continues "...those sorts of things become more decidedly connected with the fine arts".<sup>53</sup> This range of work requires a detailed understanding of art, and he believes that this knowledge is particularly lacking in "...the Gothic or Old English style".<sup>54</sup>

When asked to comment on his own assistants, Smith claims that he has noticed an improvement in them all, which is born out of a general desire for self-

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<sup>51</sup> SC q. 602, p. 42.

<sup>52</sup> SC q. 649, p. 44.

<sup>53</sup> SC q. 649, p. 44.

advancement. He also notes that those that have even some ability of drawing are more able to carry out work than those that do not. Such educated workmen are also able to communicate any problems in the actual practice of carving and modelling.<sup>55</sup> Mr. Smith further explains the differences:

...those branches that are purely mechanical and depend much on accuracy of measurement, such as the execution of Corinthian capitals, are done by ingenious common workmen, if I may so term them; when they are employed on work nearly approaching to fine art, which requires more study and mental comprehension, of course the men have better practice, and if they succeed they demand higher wages, and are entitled to it.<sup>56</sup>

Generally Smith observes that exhibitions are an extremely valuable source of such an education, as well as "...the opportunity of practising upon works that are likely to improve them".<sup>57</sup>

The self-improving spirit of his workforce is discussed. Smith claims that it is evident in the changing habits of their personal lives: "[t]he men who attend the coffee-shops seem to consider themselves belonging to a more respected class of society and will not associate with those who go to public-houses".<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore, this willingness to improve is also apparent in the widespread reading of penny publications amongst his assistants, and the desire of the workers to be given instruction in art as well as visiting exhibitions. Smith believes that to encourage this, museums should be opened when the working classes are able to attend (i.e. outside working hours), and that entrance fees should be waived, or at least be lowered in price. Smith notes: "I have always

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> "...I sent my foreman into Yorkshire with work; on his arrival he found difficulties arose which he had not, nor had I anticipated, and by letter to me, illustrated by his sketches, he explained all that I could wish for. No one but a man conversant with drawings could have done that..." (*SC* q. 636, p. 44).

<sup>56</sup> *SC* q. 652, pp. 44-45.

<sup>57</sup> *SC* q. 646, p. 44.

<sup>58</sup> *SC* q. 634-5 (only one question but numbered in that way), p. 45.



considered that the best means of serving the industrious classes, is to increase their means of serving themselves”.<sup>59</sup>

The questioning turns to the relative merits of design in France and Britain, and Smith believes that Britain is not inferior to France in design. However, he does note that “...the French workmen, collectively, are better educated in art than the English workmen, consequently the French artist has a greater facility of getting his designs well executed than the English artist”.<sup>60</sup> Ultimately, Smith blames the manufacturers who are willing to put up with such a low standard of workmanship. He continues:

[w]hatever deficiency of taste is displayed in our manufactures, arises not so much from want of taste in artists to design and in our workmen to execute, as it does from want of study and education in the arts among proprietors and conductors of establishments where in classical design and execution forms an important feature. I am also of opinion, that the public, as a body, are not yet sufficiently educated in the arts to discriminate between pure classical elegance and meretricious finery.<sup>61</sup>

However, Smith does concede that manufacturers must provide what the public want to buy, and thus it is the taste of all that needs to be improved in order to create a more ready market for higher quality goods.

When asked for examples where manufacturers have employed artists, he lists the following: Coade & Sealey (artificial stone manufacturers) who employed the elder Bacon and Rossi; Rundle & Bridge (silversmiths)<sup>62</sup> who employed Flaxman, Stothard, Theed and Baily; and also Wedgwood (ceramics) who he notes, used to employ many eminent artists. However, the witness suggests that the utilisation

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<sup>59</sup> SC q. 663, p. 45.

<sup>60</sup> SC q. 667, p. 45.

<sup>61</sup> SC q. 670, p. 46.

<sup>62</sup> Simon was passed over by Charles II after the Restoration, for an Antwerp engraver John Roetier and was thus considered by Wyon as symbolic of the ignorance of national talent that still existed in the nineteenth century (Carlisle *A Memoir of the Life and Work of William Wyon* 1837, p. 17).

of artists in manufacture has been reduced (possibly due to less investment) and that the businesses he has listed, have become less successful because of it.

Concerning copyright, Mr. Smith replies that a more comprehensive system is desperately needed. Even his designs are liable to piracy, sometimes from his own workforce, and there is no protection from it. He is not covered by the copyright of the sculptor because this does not include ornament in architecture. Furthermore, he doubts that the term 'invention in sculpture' would be applied to architectural work of the type he undertakes. However, despite all this, Smith has not considered an alternative copyright system.

**10 August 1835 George Foggo esq., qq. 683-747, pp. 46-52**

George Foggo is a historical painter who is employed within the bronze and silver trade. He is initially asked about the state of the industry and the reasons for it. Foggo claims that it is very much depressed in Britain, in contrast to France, and believes that this is due to the poor copyright laws. In both cost and ease of application, Foggo believes that the French have a superior system of copyright. When manufacturers are more confident about getting a conviction (and thus money returned), and when they have less of an initial outlay of money in seeking prosecution, it has a profound affect on the emphasis they place on design. According to the witness, this is revealed if one looks at the examples of France and Britain. In Britain, as opposed to France, manufacturers do not spend much on the initial design (and it is therefore of a lower standard) because they cannot rely on the copyright system. Thus British design is inferior.

Foggo then goes on to discuss Flaxman's Achilles' shield sculpture that was cast in bronze and silver-gilt. He claims that the bronze was unpopular as opposed to the silver mainly due to the apparent value for money of the more costly material, relative to the price of the bronze. However, Foggo claims that this



shows a lack of public taste because the bronze is more suited to works of art. When the suggestion is made that the bronze, being cast, is therefore produced by a less artistic process, Foggo notes how this particular bronze was finely finished by a celebrated and experienced chiseller.<sup>63</sup>

Foggo is then asked to discuss the system of copyright that he feels is appropriate, and he suggests that protection should be based on the talent of the artist, i.e. on the amount of artistic input within the design. Some items are more transitory than others, he suggests, and these often have very little artistic content, whereas other ornaments are very specifically created through artistic endeavour. Thus copyright could span anything from three months to fifty years. This would be judged by a panel of people (at the time of prosecution), who are not necessarily all artists, but must be conversant with art. This should be a special jury and not simply the general public. Foggo complains that public jurisdiction has not worked in America.

When asked about the superiority or inferiority of French and British manufacture in bronze and silver, Foggo claims that in terms of invention, the British and French are relatively similar. However, it is in the “accuracy of execution” that the French are superior.<sup>64</sup> The ability to produce good design at this level is in sharp contrast in the two cities – there is perhaps one person capable of such work in London, as opposed to at least ten in Paris. Regarding the reasons for this contrast, Foggo suggests it is the education system in France, and particularly Paris that has created such a skilled workforce. He has many years of experience having lived and studied in the French capital for seventeen years. He notes that in the private schools (which were the original system) and

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<sup>63</sup> This chiseller is Mr. Pitts (*SC* q. 693, p. 47). When Rundell & Bridge & Co. gave up the business in 1842, “...they had in their possession two copies of bronze of the Shield of Achilles as designed and modelled by the late John Flaxman... [t]hese shields the only ones ever executed in Bronze were of the value of 250 guineas each and these they presented to the University of Oxford and Cambridge as the fittest depositories... of the most Classical production of that most talented Artist...” (Fox [*An Account of*] *the firm Rundell, Bridge*, 1957, p. 90).

<sup>64</sup> *SC* q. 699, p. 48.

in the Royal Academy and the government school of drawing, the French have an effective system to educate artizans.

The questioner asks specifically about training for artizans, as opposed to fine artists, and Foggo suggests that the training he has described provides work for both areas as "...persons who do not evince talent of a high order, naturally fall into the employment of manufacturers".<sup>65</sup> But he is asked further about the actual schools in France where designing for manufacture is taught. Foggo states that there is a school for such training in each department in Paris, but he does not believe the teaching to be effective. He claims that it is other schools that have provided what people term the national character of French taste in manufactures. These are private schools run by one artist whose reputation is built on the standard of the designers he trains. In comparison, the government schools of Louis the Fourteenth and Colbert, have been injurious to French taste. This is due, he believes, to the loss of individuality and the lack of response, in the government schools, to fashionable and current tastes. Rather, Foggo believes, the national schools "...have placed such fetters on imagination that the utmost that instruction can do in France is to inculcate fixed principles and precision of execution".<sup>66</sup>

When asked to clarify his views about the French schools, Foggo states that, even after Napoleon's reformation, they are old-fashioned establishments, riddled with corruption (in terms of how instructors are selected) and, he claims, that they only teach fixed principles. However, when asked whether it is important that there should be a basic knowledge of artistic principles (the questioner lists perspective, anatomy, proportion and botany as examples), Foggo replies that "... it is almost as necessary for a people to possess a knowledge of those points as to know how to write".<sup>67</sup> However, it is the restriction this teaching seems to

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<sup>65</sup> SC q. 705, p. 48.

<sup>66</sup> SC q. 720-1 (numbered in that way, although one question), p. 50.

<sup>67</sup> SC q. 728, p. 50.



place on imagination that Foggo notes, and it is this that France suffers from, according to the witness. The same issue is not the case in Britain, however, because such a system is not in place and a capitalist economy encourages competition. As a consequence, Foggo believes that this also promotes imagination and therefore, on this merit alone, a man working in the “humbler branches of manufactures”, may move into high art. He lists as examples Martin, Muss, Bone, Bacon and Banks.<sup>68</sup> However still, principles are important in order to allow the successful completion of a design. Foggo notes that in perspective England is particularly deficient. Furthermore he claims that there is also “...a very imperfect knowledge of the history of the arts and commerce, their effects on each other and on the state of nations, and thence false theories”.<sup>69</sup>

Foggo is then asked about the influence that Paris has on the rest of France, as opposed to London on the rest of Britain, and this draws the witness into a discussion about regional versus central authority and characteristics. Unlike Paris, replies Foggo, London does not have the same immediate influence on the rest of Britain. Rather regions have very specific identities and this is good for manufacture because specialism in production tends to be in specific areas. Thus, a museum may have a section on mineralogy which would be beneficial to that area, but not to another. It is therefore important that if a central board were established for education (whatever form that might take), that it would not eliminate the characteristics and specialisation that different regions require. Furthermore, that it is important that any system administering the dissemination of art, should be fair and representation of the different regions. Foggo believes that this would provide a more imaginative basis from which the dissemination of the arts could take a greater variety of forms. The witness also associates the organisation of a “proper general board with local management” as being capable of leading “the morals of the people as well as of their intellect”.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> SC q. 726, p. 50.

<sup>69</sup> SC q. 729, p. 50.

<sup>70</sup> SC q. 731, p. 51.

Foggo then moves on to note that some manufacturers, who excel in design, protect themselves despite the lack of copyright. This is because designs that are of a very high standard, are generally too difficult for other firms to copy. He gives the example of the japan trade as an area where this 'natural' protection occurs. The witness claims that the competition amongst firms in the japan trade encourages good design which in turn discourages plagiarism. However, despite the general high quality of design, he notes that the japan trade is still broadly deficient in the use of perspective. He claims that of all rules, perspective should be given a high priority. Even so, according to the witness, British japanning is of a much higher standard than the French, not only in technique but also in design.

Foggo is then asked (initially in relation to the japanning trade and later generally) whether there are persons employed as designers. The painter says that as far as he knows there are no such persons in Birmingham, and he does not know of any in London either (although he is not well acquainted with the situation there).

The questioning turns to the various areas of educational provision and support already in existence. Firstly the Mechanics Institutes are discussed. Foggo claims that there would be a resistance to any government intervention in the structure of these organisations. The questioner attempts to discuss how friendly societies have come under the jurisdiction of an act of parliament (i.e. government intervention), and therefore that Mechanics Institutes may do the same. But this suggestion is somewhat ignored by the witness. However he does concede that Mechanics Institutes, with their breadth of instruction (i.e. anything from drawing to chemistry), would provide good teaching, as opposed to a formally established school of design. He also agrees with the questioner that a central board could provide the regions with resources such as models and casts. Foggo also suggests that establishing museums would be beneficial.



**10 August 1835 Samuel Wiley, qq. 748-807, pp. 52-54**

Samuel Wiley is a representative of the Birmingham japanning firm, Jennings & Betteridge.<sup>71</sup> He appears to be responsible for sales as he discusses the lack of public taste in relation to design thus: “I could sell them the worst things, the most unmeaning, in preference to the most splendid designs and the best executions”.<sup>72</sup>

Wiley states that the standard in the japan trade has improved through the workforce’s own endeavours, as well as by the system of tuition set in place by Jennings & Betteridge. However he believes that more could be done as the work force are still deficient in the two most essential qualities – outline and persepctive. He suggests that in teaching this to all at an elementary level, one would also be educating the public taste. He notes also how exhibitions are very important in relation to this general public improvement, as well as providing more specific instruction for the workers who enter the trade. He stresses that such events have been influential in Birmingham and that employees from his firm have been involved in displaying work in the Birmingham Exhibition.

When asked if the British japan workers imitate Chinese designs, Wiley answers decidedly. They do not because Chinese work is “...unmeaning as it regards design and perspective”.<sup>73</sup> However it is in the execution and materials that the Chinese are superior. They have in particular a gold powder that has a brilliancy more than any British colours under varnish. It is not available, but Mr. Jennings has tried to procure some himself. Wiley states again that the British are far superior to the French, whose japanning trade is not established. Jennings & Betteridge also export to America.

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<sup>71</sup> This is actually Jennens & Bettridge, Constitution Hill, Birmingham (Pigot 1835, p. 556).

<sup>72</sup> SC q. 765, pp. 52-53.

<sup>73</sup> SC q. 774, p. 53.

In conclusion Wiley is asked specifically about the designers in his own firm. He notes that there is no general designer, but that each workman does his own designs. Thus the best designer-workers are paid up to 4 and a half guineas per week, while other men earn between 15 shillings and 2 guineas. The fact that each worker does his own designs requires that a person learning the principles of drawing must also know the manufacturing techniques. This combination Wiley describes as “indispensable”.<sup>74</sup> However, despite this, he does not think it necessary that a school should teach both aspects. A school could teach the principles of drawing and then, when a student comes into the firm aged between twelve and fourteen, they can learn the manufacturing – this is what occurs at Jennings & Betteridge. The questioner therefore suggests that the first stage (learning the principles of drawing) could happen in London, while the specific manufacturing education could occur ‘on the spot’ in Birmingham, and Wiley agrees with this.

**14 August 1835 Monsieur Claude Guillotte, qq. 808-848, pp. 54-58**

Monsieur Guillotte is a manufacturer specialising in jacquard looms for silk manufacture (not cotton) and French bar looms (Prenallere) for riband production.<sup>75</sup> The riband looms can construct ten to thirty ribands at a time (with only the attendance of one man). These Prenallere looms were the first produced for Britain, and Guillotte made one hundred and fifty of them in that instance. The witness describes the varying capacities of the jacquard looms and notes that, three years ago, he produced one of the most complicated machines to be made for the British market. It took 4 600 threads for weaving napkins and tablecloths and this was again to be worked by just one man. Other looms have had a capacity for 1 600 - 1 700 threads (for linen also), and at present Guillotte is making smaller jacquard looms (thread capacity in the hundreds) for many parts

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<sup>74</sup> SC q. 803, p. 54.

<sup>75</sup> Crispin Street, London (Higgins ‘The Spitalfields Silk Industry in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century’ 1989, p. 47).



of England. These machines are being sold particularly in Yorkshire (for the merino and damask market<sup>76</sup>), in Bolton and Manchester (for the same fabrics), and in Coventry (for the riband trade). In total, the witness estimates that there are between 7 000 and 8 000 jacquard looms being employed in the textile industry.

Guillotte continues (directed by questioning) to describe how, since the introduction of the jacquard loom eleven years ago, the demand for the machines has increased tremendously. He notes that only four years ago, when he attempted to sell jacquard looms in Yorkshire, Halifax, Huddersfield and the surrounding areas, there was only one manufacturer interested.<sup>77</sup> Now he has orders from London for six to ten machines at a time, but orders from Yorkshire of sixty to eighty machines. Guillotte notes that this demand for looms will not continue, and he also comments that in the shawl trade, the interest in jacquard looms has been less apparent. Although he has had some sales in Scotland and Norwich, his company have had less interest. This is due, he believes, to the expensive cost of looms that are demanded to create the complex patterns of shawls (they would be of 5 000 – 6 000 thread capacity). In Scotland, they continue to use draw-boys instead of the more automated system.

The questioning moves on to Monsieur Guillotte's own workforce. He employs around thirty-eight to forty workmen in London, some of whom are foreign craftsmen (but who often leave the job quickly and find alternative jobs with higher wages). He pays these men on average about 30 shillings a week. The production of his machines costs less on the whole than in France as the construction is all within his own workshops, as opposed to the French production which is spread between several manufacturers of different jacquard components. The cost is also kept down due to the competition between his

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<sup>76</sup> Merino is a fine woollen yarn (a mixture of wool and cotton similar to cashmere). This is taken from the coats of merino sheep. Damask is a figured woven material with a pattern visible on both sides, or visible by the reflection of light.

business and a rival company. There are only these two main producers of jacquard looms in Britain, although other manufacturers have made unsuccessful attempts to produce them. The witness concentrates mainly on the production of the machines, but he does have a clerk who instructs manufacturers on their use.

Monsieur Guillotte is asked to discuss the actual process that the design undergoes when it is adapted to the loom, and the witness in reply, outlines a general scheme. Firstly the design or pattern is drawn on paper where it is initially judged. The paper image represents how the material should finally appear. Then if the design is deemed appropriate, the pattern is transferred to a ruled paper which effectively magnifies the detail of the proposed fabric, "...so as to place so many threads to the inch, perhaps 20, so that every square represents a thread".<sup>78</sup> Guillotte continues:

This is what the French call *mise en carte*, and in English put upon rule-paper. The next process the rule-paper undergoes is, to be read in, which transfers the pattern from the rule-paper, and prepares it fully for the stamping of the cards. The rest of the process is mechanical, consisting of punching holes in the cards, according to the number required, and applying the card to the machine.<sup>79</sup>

The witness notes that this new system has reduced the need for an experienced workforce. He notes that even boys of sixteen can carry out a complicated pattern, using this system, where before it would have demanded weavers of twenty or thirty years' experience. In conclusion to this initial description, Monsieur Guillotte notes that it is in the designing and the *mise en carte* that British manufacturers are deficient. He also notes another factor affecting the success of British manufacture could be that the cards used in the jacquard loom are far more expensive in Britain than in France. Thus the initial outlay to manufacturers in Britain is much more costly.

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<sup>77</sup> Mr. Gill bought 100 machines (SC q. 812, p. 55)

<sup>78</sup> SC q. 819, p. 55.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*



Guillotte notes that there has been great competition in textile manufacture using the jacquard loom since 1826 and that as a consequence many French dyers have begun to work in Britain. However, despite this interplay of work force, the French are still superior to the British because the French designer and the French *metteur en carte* are one and the same person. They design the pattern, put the design onto ruled paper, and have also trained in every branch of textile manufacture, including the weaving. Thus because of this practical knowledge, Guillotte suggests, the designs are superior. The witness is asked to clarify a number of points and he states that he is not suggesting that the initial designs are better in France than they are in Britain – he estimates that they are of the same standard. However, the success of the design also depends on its production, and this is the potential that the French system allows. In Lyons, the designer will also be the *metteur en carte* and this role will not be considered inferior, but equally as important as that of the designer. Furthermore, on occasions there is no initial design, but the *mise en carte* is the first stage in the process. Thus “[t]he *metteur en carte* is himself an artist”.<sup>80</sup> A manufacturer in France will employ three or four of these skilled artists, while in Britain, there will only be one artist to create the designs for eight or ten businesses. Such a skilled designer and *metteur en carte* in France will receive between 50 *l.* to 400 *l.* a year, and even a share of the business, because the fancy trade is entirely dependent on these workers. They may also be paid less, but be instructed while working. This is because a worker of this type “...ought to be well instructed in designing. He ought to be also well acquainted with manufactures in theory and in principle. They are so at Lyons, but they are not so in this country”.<sup>81</sup>

Monsieur Guillotte is then questioned regarding the situation at Lyons and the history of the jacquard loom. The witness states that although it was invented between 1808 and 1810, the loom was not kept a secret or exploited much in

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<sup>80</sup> SC q. 824, p. 56.

Lyons because it was thought initially not to be a very influential invention. Since then, however, it has revolutionised weaving and now means that, where a workman had to have ten years of experience at least, they may now have six months and be as proficient. The introduction of the jacquard loom has therefore moved the emphasis of skill away from the weaving itself and more towards the role of design. Initially the machinery provided a great advantage to France, but since its introduction into other countries, it is through strength of design and lower costs, that the French manufacturers have remained successful.

There is a school of design at Lyons where the aspects of training required for designing on the jacquard loom are taught. This teaching was transformed when such specialised machinery began to be used. Thus, the young artists learnt how to put the designs on ruled paper, and initially jacquard looms were set up in the school itself. Now however, the artists use looms outside the school after six months of instruction in the theory of manufacture. Sometimes during their practical instruction, artists must also spend two hours a day learning about the theory of applying their design to the machinery. This is taught by private instructors within the school of design in Lyons. According to the witness “[t]he discovery of the jacquard loom infinitely multiplied the number of young artists, who devoted themselves to the *mise en carte*”.<sup>82</sup> This is because it allowed a freedom to produce a greater number of designs, where before, producing new designs was expensive and laborious.

The questioning moves on to the relationship between French and British designs, i.e. do the English copy French patterns. The witness claims that each country copies the best designs of the other. In Britain, it is the cotton printed designs (particularly from Manchester) that are most copied. The French also copy the drawings for silks made by Mr. Adams and Mr. Perrin, while the British copy any number of French designs. There are individuals who trade new

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<sup>81</sup> SC q. 825, p. 56.



designs to each country. But generally speaking, because the British are unable to carry out the designs effectively on the loom, that is, they do not understand the process of *mise en carte*, the French manufacturers tend to use the British patterns as "...mere ideas; in the execution of the working drawings the French improve upon us".<sup>83</sup>

When asked what affect the establishment of a school of design in London would have, the witness is adamant that within three years, the standard of design in Britain would be raised to that of French manufacture.

In conclusion, various questions regarding the practicalities of the jacquard loom are addressed to the witness. The loom can be used to produce all sorts of woven objects including straw hats, and it can weave horse hair and wire. The card used does not matter particularly, as the cards will not wear out, since new ones are constantly being used because of the changes in patterns. Thus it is really the Excise duty on paper that needs to be addressed in order to reduce the cost of using the loom in Britain. He notes that the British manufacturers are very aware of their deficiencies and are willing to make improvements. Finally, he is asked about dyes and he notes that although French colours are initially very brilliant, they fade quickly as opposed to the English dyes which are more permanent, if less initially appealing.

A letter submitted by Monsieur Guillotte apparently after giving his testimony, is then printed at the end of his questioning. In it, he urges the Select Committee to establish a school (in Spitalfields or that locale) that would teach the practical aspects of manufacturing, in particular the relationship between designing and the *mise en carte*. This he suggests would almost guarantee an improvement in British manufactures so that "...in a very short time the English manufactures will soon rival, if not altogether equal, the French manufacture, and thus throw

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<sup>82</sup> SC q. 831, p. 57.

off the shame of seeing foreign manufacture surpass the English in quality and superior workmanship”.<sup>84</sup>

**17 August 1835 Mr. John Henning, qq. 849-907, pp. 58-63**

Mr. John Henning is a well-known modeller who specialises in classical figures. His most famous exterior works to date are the gateway at Hyde Park Corner (contracted by Mr. Burton in 1827) and the frieze of the Athenæum club (which is a selection of sculptures copied from the Parthenon); these commissions were both undertaken with his son, John Henning. Until these works, Henning had done small-scale drawing and modelling, making copies of the sculptures of the Parthenon in intaglio,<sup>85</sup> from 1816-1822.

Henning is questioned about copyright and the witness makes a heart-felt plea for the protection laws to be changed. Mr. Henning claims that he has suffered extensively from the lack of copyright, particularly as his own making process provides people who wish to copy his work with a ready source. This is because when he has produced a model, for example a Parthenon figure, it is produced reversed on slate in intaglio, so that a cast may be made in plaster. Thus “...whoever lays their hands on them [the casts] may, with very little trouble, take moulds in sulphur, wax or plaster, and multiply them to any number”.<sup>86</sup> However, Henning cannot bring himself to employ the full weight of the law in these cases, since he notes that the act of piracy is probably due to the poverty of the perpetrator. The modeller would prefer therefore that “a cheap tribunal” was available.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> SC q. 841, p. 57.

<sup>84</sup> SC letter in addition to testimony, p. 58.

<sup>85</sup> This is a process of cutting into a surface, making “a kind of relief in reverse”, an engraved seal is a good example of the process.

<sup>86</sup> SC q. 853, p. 59.

<sup>87</sup> SC q. 857, p. 59.



Henning is then asked about his own art education and he answers in poetic fashion:

[i]n art, as in every profession, the master, in many cases, can only be considered as the finger-post which points the road the pupil must go on to the place; the pilgrim, creeping or running, must exert himself to the end of his journey, otherwise he will never arrive there.<sup>88</sup>

Thus, when asked whether instruction in the arts should be made nationally available, Henning suggests that the Government should not be bothered with it, and that it is ultimately a case of encouraging self-improvement. However, if an institution were to be state funded, the witness suggests that "...a voluntary subscription museum, conducted by a committee of subscribers, in places where these were to be found, furnished with models of every... department of manufactures, every kind of fabric of cloth, plain and ornamented, or coloured, and if possible the mechanism by which it has been done".<sup>89</sup> This sort of institution, provided it was thoughtfully managed, would be useful to both fine artists and workers in manufactures, as it would provide a spectrum of information (from textiles to medical science).<sup>90</sup> A museum would also improve public taste as a whole, suggests the witness.

Henning believes that since every profession must combine art and skill to some degree, i.e. the manual application of art, that drawing must be taught at an elementary level. He notes how previously (forty years ago), in the Paisley weaving trade, weavers knew about designing their own patterns, but were also experienced in the other aspects of production. Now however, with the division

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<sup>88</sup> SC q. 864, p. 59.

<sup>89</sup> SC q. 865, p. 60.

<sup>90</sup> "The carpenter would study what related to architecture; the geometrical construction of roofs, centers [sic.] for bridge-building, &c.: the cabinet-maker would be engaged also in straight-line drawing, construction and the ornamental parts of his art" (ibid.).

of labour, this knowledge is fragmented and workers do not have a holistic understanding of the manufacturing process.<sup>91</sup>

The witness is then asked to describe how he made casts from the original Elgin marbles (the Parthenon frieze). Henning describes how, after coming to London in 1811, he was introduced to Lord Elgin who gave him permission to draw from the marbles. However initially, Henning underwent an examination of his work from a Royal Academician and confesses to being surprised by the response from this viewer. Henning relates to the committee what was said: “[t]o allow Mr. Henning to draw from the marbles would be like sending a boy to university before he had learned his letters”.<sup>92</sup> But, despite this apparent rebuff, the modeller was permitted to study the Elgin marbles, which were temporarily located at Burlington House in Piccadilly. When they were moved to the British Museum, he was allowed, by Sir Henry Ellis, to continue his studies.

At first, Henning did not make any moulds because he had not been given permission “to make any publication” of the casts.<sup>93</sup> However, when he asked whether it would be acceptable, he made more drawings and some small pieces in ivory (at this point the witness refers to a white enamel glass cast). But Henning describes the difficulty of working on such a soft surface as ivory, and thus he began using intaglio engraving. He found this system was excellent for reproducing fine details with less effort than on ivory. These initial pieces were commissioned by such people as the Duke of Devonshire, the late Princess Charlotte, the Marquis of Landsdowne, Early Rosslyn, the Duke of York and George the Fourth. They bought ivory and intaglio pieces that were smaller versions (one-fifth and one-twentieth the originals respectively) of the Parthenon marbles. The particular area of frieze that Henning was engaged with, was a

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<sup>91</sup> “The drawings in many cases done by themselves were transferred to the cloth by what they called “reading it on the holly brod”, which seems to me to correspond with the *mise en carte* of the French” (SC q. 867, p. 60).

<sup>92</sup> SC q. 868, p. 60.

<sup>93</sup> SC q. 870, p. 60.



section of which there is only a fragment (no. 47). This is the first piece of the north-west corner of the Parthenon.<sup>94</sup> As such, Henning was engaged in a process of reconstruction, where through study and his own invention, he made the fragment into a whole piece again. These new devised sections are thus what Henning wishes had been protected by copyright. Instead, however, he lost the profit that this work should have gleaned. His work was copied, produced at a much lower standard, and sold so that, apart from the initial sales that he made, his work was never sold or reproduced to anyone but to the upper echelons of society.

The questioning moves on to the risk of damaging original marble sculptures by taking moulds from them in plaster or wax. Henning claims that, contrary to the belief that plaster moulds discolour the marble, the material actually removes dirt from the statue's surface, thus improving its condition. Wax cannot be used to make casts from marble, he notes. However, the questioner appears determined that Henning should submit to some consideration of wax moulds and eventually the witness agrees that experimentation in producing wax casts should be explored. He states, in accordance with the questioner, that it is important for all avenues to be explored in order to find the cheapest but most effective way of improving the circulation of fine works of art among the people, so as to transform the common taste.

Mr. Henning then goes on to discuss the work on the Athenæum frieze and at Hyde Park Corner. He notes that these commissions were carried out by carving directly in stone from drawings, and he uses this as an example of how useful a drawing education can be. When asked whether he believes this is beneficial for all aspects of work in the arts and design, he replies that he does. Furthermore he notes, again with reference to the museum idea, that had he been encouraged with

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<sup>94</sup> Henning says that this piece, removed from its display case, was damaged by rain during two winters (*SC* q. 873, p. 61).

this type of provision, he would have preferred to work more as an engineer or mechanist, rather than an artist.

He is then asked in detail about the preservation of his carvings in the two exterior works he has discussed, and he gives a detailed answer outlining the technique he used. It was generated through observation and experiment and he soaks the stone and marble in heated fine white wax, so that the substance penetrates the surface of the sculpture. This not only protects the work from the adverse London weather, but also gives the marble the look of a high quality material. He does not know whether he is the first to think of this treatment for marble, but he discovered it through his own personal research.

**17 August 1835 Mr. John Martin, qq. 908-946, pp. 63-67**

John Martin is a painter whose early experience was in coach-painting. Martin claims that the before he became a painter, the trade he was in was a very badly skilled, particularly as regards drawing and colouring. However, he believes that there is potential for improvement if it is encouraged by the provision of museums, as opposed to schools. The witness suggests that institutions, such as the British Museum, should have professors who could instruct students on subjects like the human figure, landscape painting, architecture and other branches of the arts.

Another area that Martin has an acquaintance with is china painting (he explains this as a type of enamel-painting), which was fashionable when he first moved to London. However, he believes that since then, the standards of the industry have dropped, particularly since artists of such calibre as Mr. Muss and Mr. Marsh<sup>95</sup>, are no longer employed. He notes how these excellent artists have not been recognised and so their example has been lost – why have not Mr. Bone's

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<sup>95</sup> "... a very eminent flower-painter" (*SC* q. 913, p. 64)



“Eminent Characters of the Elizabethan Age” been preserved for the British Museum, or the National Gallery?

Martin is asked about the differences in standard between French and British china painting and he claims that the French have a better quality finish to their work, because the workmen are better draftsmen as they have Government funded education. He believes that for a china painter, as a fine artist, all branches of art education are necessary, including the same detailed knowledge of the human figure. He states again that this could take place in a museum which provides a ready supply of good examples. He notes that if instructors were in place at an institution like the British museum then, with the pieces available to work from (particularly the Elgin marbles) and proper instruction on the spot, students would learn a great deal more than simply observing others copying objects as happens at present. He puts forward his suggested scheme:

...one master might teach two or three branches of the art, as follows: one master should teach anatomy and proportion; another, architecture, isometrical perspective and perspective; a third, landscape and nature in general; indeed professors might be appointed to teach every branch of art, science and literature; as in the British Museum every thing requisite is on the spot, and few alterations in the establishment is needed. The National Gallery, and the National Gallery of Practical Science, might become branches of the British Museum. The grand object of a student should be to divide his time so as not to lose any, and not to give too much study to one pursuit or branch of the art. I firmly believe that the arts are useful to every branch of manufacture in the land; there is hardly a branch one can name that is not useful, from the lowest to the highest state of society...<sup>96</sup>

Mr. Martin is then asked to discuss china-painting further and he states, in agreement with the questioner, that a better understanding of art would improve sales in china. He claims that, although in the past china painters such as himself, Mr. Muss and Mr. Marsh designed new patterns, at present patterns are so poor

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<sup>96</sup> SC q. 924, p. 64.

that they can hardly be classed as having been invented. He claims that the French are far superior.

When one has begun to understand the principles of art, suggests the witness, it become impossible to tolerate anything that is badly drawn or constructed. In agreement with the questioner, he notes that the forms produced by Wedgwood, though of the commonest materials, had a fundamental understanding of proportion and beauty, thus "... accidental circumstances [i.e. fashion] can never affect real beauty".<sup>97</sup> He then goes on to discuss the relationship of an object's form to its decoration and notes that if a form is very beautiful, it can be ruined by bad painting. Thus he himself prefers plain china and would pay higher for it (though at present it is the decorated china that is more expensive).

The witness is then asked about glass painting and he states that, as with china painting, the state of the industry is very low. This is particularly worrying, since the art of glass painting is a higher branch of art, and might even be one of the highest forms of art, since in contrast to oil painting, the transparency of the glass offers real illumination to a work. He claims that the skills of glass painting have been lost since ancient times but that it has been far advanced since then (apart from in the construction of one particular colour – ruby).<sup>98</sup> However, he suggests that because the material is so fragile, that no one will invest in educating or employing true artists because the work is too easily destroyed, nor can an artist experiment with design. This fear of breakage is due to the heavy duty on glass, making the raw material very expensive.

Martin then states that he left glass painting because although he sold work (particularly to Lord Ennismore) he found that, despite the risk of breakage, he

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<sup>97</sup> SC q. 931, p. 65.

<sup>98</sup> "We can blend the colours and produce the effects of light and shadow, which they could not do, by harmonizing and mixing the colours in such a way, and fixing by proper enamelling and burning them, that they shall afterwards become just as permanent as those of the ancients, with the additional advantage of throwing in superior art" (SC q. 935, p. 65).



could not get a high enough price for the work. Therefore he moved into historical painting and engraving.

The questioner asks the witness whether there is copyright available for this work and Martin claims that there is no protection and notes several instances where his work is being copied and sold at low prices, resulting in his “...complete ruin”.<sup>99</sup> This includes both copies from France and those made in Britain. He states that the situation is getting so desperate, because his work is expensive to produce, that he may consider leaving the profession. The main problem for Martin is that to bring an action against someone copying his work is so expensive that, even if the case is won (which is never guaranteed), he will always make a financial loss. He gives the example of trying to take out an injunction to prevent someone exhibiting a version of his painting *Belshazzar's Feast* as a diorama in Oxford Street. This painting was not only a copy of his own, but the owner had claimed that Martin himself had painted it. This use of the painter's name was very bad for his career because the copy of the original painting was very bad. But despite these obvious infringements of copyright, the witness states that his attempts to prevent the diorama from opening were unsuccessful:

...the plagiarist is not only safe from prosecution on account of the expense of such prosecution outweighing all the advantages that can be derived from a verdict; but as in my own case, he even comes into the field with a cheaper production, supported by all the effect of the advertisements, and other expensive means of publicity that my own performances had led me to adopt. He not only robs me of my ideas, but establishes a lucrative trade on the effects of my pecuniary outlay...<sup>100</sup>

As with other property, states Martin, copyright should remain the property of the designer, and then his/her heirs for as long as they possess the work, unless some other system has been legally arranged. However, because the laws are

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<sup>99</sup> *SC* q. 943, p. 66.

<sup>100</sup> *SC* q. 946, pp. 66-67.

unclear, this type of copyright is difficult (because no record of sales are kept) and expensive to claim. An improvement needs to therefore be made. Martin suggests that a committee made up of gentlemen and artists should meet in museums (like the British Museum and other provincial establishments) in London, Birmingham, Bath, Liverpool, Hull, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin and Cork, every fortnight. This group would judge on new designs and from then on any unlawful reproductions (from Britain or another country) of a copyrighted design would be seized and the authors of the copies prosecuted.

**17 August 1835 George Rennie Esq., qq. 947-983, pp. 67-70**

George Rennie is an artist who has lived in Italy and other parts of the Continent for nearly eight years, and has studied sculpture in Rome. During that time he has had the opportunity to observe that in Italy, which is not a manufacturing country, almost all imports purchased are supplied by France or Germany, except the plainest goods. These plain products, such as calicoes, common printed cottons, cutlery and earthenware, are supplied by Britain and he suggests that, although the Italians are aware of the quality of British goods in terms of durability, they prefer the French and German designs. Thus he mourns the lack of design understanding in Britain, and although he does note that there has been an improvement in British design, he claims that this has been “by imitation [of the French] rather than by any invention”.<sup>101</sup>

When asked why he considers the French superior in design, Rennie states that in drawing particularly, they are more correct and this seems to be due to the instruction given to the manufacturing population. He suggests that a similar system should be put in place in England with teaching in all branches of art, but particularly in anatomy, botany and perspective. However he comments that

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<sup>101</sup> SC q. 952, p. 67.



consideration should be given as to how far the government should be involved, and the witness warns that full control over the system would lead to a general style lacking in spontaneity and innovation. He does agree that a central normal school should be established that would provide teachers for the provinces, but again he states that "...a central impulse might be given, without the branches being too affected by that central influence, so as to reduce the whole to the same manner".<sup>102</sup>

He also suggests that a similar scheme could be put in place whereby a centralised London museum could transmit casts and models to more localised institutions, and vice versa. This dépôt system would be necessary to prevent one museum becoming very well-stocked but being in only one area, and therefore inefficient in promoting a widespread knowledge of the arts and design. At present there is no way of the public accessing casts of art from Europe and, although there are marbles at the British Museum and some casts in the Royal Academy, these are not available for widespread use. As an artist himself, Rennie feels that easy access to these types of sources is essential if design is to improve. On the Continent material of this kind is readily available in the museums of many towns.

On the matter of provision for instruction in the arts, Rennie is asked to comment again on the sort of intervention he believes would be appropriate from the Government. The witness reiterates his previous statements and suggests that corporations would provide partial support for the scheme, alongside the Government. However, he does not have any evidence to support this suggestion, apart from that of the mayor of Coventry who has stated to Rennie that "...the corporation would willingly assist".<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> SC q. 959, p. 68.

<sup>103</sup> SC q. 965, pp. 68-69.

The questioner makes several suggestions to which the witness answers in affirmation. Firstly, he agrees that it would be desirable that facilities for instructing the application of art to manufactures should be established or incorporated into existing institutions, such as Mechanics' Institutes. These should be connected to museums. This is important because the witness believes there is no present establishment for this purpose. Secondly he agrees that galleries and museums should be free to enter, in order to encourage more people to visit them. Thirdly, he agrees that copies of fine statues should be made in iron work to make them more accessible. The questioner refers to Berlin in relation to this but Rennie has only seen copies of the statues there, as he has never been to the city itself. And finally he also agrees that it would be desirable to have a central institution where the finest specimens of manufactures, procured from all over the world, would be displayed.

The questioning returns to the issue of copyright and Rennie is asked what system he would put in place. He believes that no other scheme but a deposit of patterns for registration in a central institution (with regional boards in the major manufacturing towns), would be viable. A board would have the power to summon the perpetrators before it and to receive evidence and sentence. The registration of a pattern would not have to necessarily be made to all boards, but if a design was recorded in Manchester but copied in London, then the London committee could apply to the Manchester deposit, and vice versa. However, he also suggests that to provide greater protection against piracy, a designer should deposit a new pattern at both a central board in London, as well as at a local board. The questioner then suggests, that if the dépôt was open to the public, it could also be utilised as a source of inspiration and education. This the witness agrees with.

As regards the improvement of public taste, Rennie believes that the establishment of museums in each town would greatly aid this cause. However,



when finally pressed on the involvement that the Government should have in any schemes to extend a knowledge of art and design to the people, the witness states:

[w]hen I alluded to non-interference, I think the danger of establishing schools is not that there is a danger of giving assistance, but it is in establishing every school on exactly the same system, so as to destroy the individual character of the separate school, although I think it quite necessary there should be a central system to give encouragement without absolute control.<sup>104</sup>

**19 August 1835 James Crabb Esq., qq. 984-1099, pp. 70-77**

James Crabb is a designer of fancy works, particularly relating to the decoration and arrangement of interiors, and to show the sort of work that he does, he has brought along several samples of his and other's work. He states that he designs small scale on paper, but can produce the pattern as effectively on a large scale in the interior itself.

He is asked about the difference between French and British wall papers because his company deal with both, and the witness shows an example of French designed wall paper (with landscape and figures). He suggests that it is easy to see the difference between French and British design because the French appear to "...understand their subject very much better than we do in England".<sup>105</sup> He goes into more detail by describing his example:

...the foliage of this... is very beautiful; the superior style in which the whole is executed shows that the designer must have carefully studied the aerial perspective of the colouring, as well as the general form and design; the spirit and truth of the animals surpass any thing we should accomplish for a similar purpose in England.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> SC q. 983, p. 70.

<sup>105</sup> SC q. 989, p. 70.

<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*

Crabb claims that this deficiency in British design is due to a lack of education.

The questioner asks the witness if this is the conclusion that he had reached prior to the Select Committee, and Crabb claims that, having only heard about the Committee the day before, it is certainly a view he has held previously.

Concerning the English designer of wall papers, Crabb is asked whether he is therefore constantly aware of a lack of education in the British work force. He says that he is, and that even if English journeymen had the same blocks for printing as the French, the results would still not be as good. This is because the French have "...a certain degree of taste and knowledge in the actual application of the colours...", whereas the English worker would not have "...sufficient intelligence to print or produce the whole design equal to this French specimen".<sup>107</sup> The questioner attempts to draw the witness out on this point, and Crabb gives more detail. He suggests that as well as the original designer of the pattern, the printer has to have some form of instruction also. It is evident that the French printer has this instruction, particularly if one looks at the finer details of the pattern. These are produced in addition to the original design, and therefore the pattern is interpreted by the printer who undertakes the finer design details. In the example he shows to the Committee, Crabb highlights how a small cloud and foliage in the background have been applied with a brush and then softened with a sponge. This he suggests would not happen in Britain because the printers do not have this understanding of art and design. He goes on to state that although English papers have improved, particularly in flock wallpapers, there are still as many bad designs as good.

The questioner moves on to ask the witness about the production of picture and mirror frames. Crabb suggests that these British designs show a similar lack of understanding as the wall papers and show inaccuracies in the carving of fruit and flowers.

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<sup>107</sup> SC q. 992, pp. 70-71.



The witness has never had any formal instruction in design from any public institution, but learnt his trade from his father who is also a designer. He has improved himself by his own observation of his father and through visiting the British Museum and the National Gallery. From the collection of paintings at the latter institution, he was provided with a lot of inspiration and instruction particularly in colour. Crabb sums up these experiences by saying: "I consider that the more extensive our acquaintance is with works of superior art, the more original and correct our conceptions would be".<sup>108</sup> However, although the witness would like to make a more extensive study of casts, he is unable to find the time and thinks that the better supply of casts would be beneficial to the cause of improving design in Britain. In his own business, most employees are trained in a similar fashion as him, being apprenticed to either a designer or a decorative painter (which is a separate business), and not to a general house of business (like Mr. Trollope's). Clarifying this apprenticeship, Crabb explains that there is no real theoretical or additional technical instruction given, other than that picked up through the standard apprenticeship, or through the worker's own leisure time study.

To highlight the problems of this system, the questioner asks what the witness would do (with no additional classical training) if his business were given an order for a set of papers that depicted the story of Cupid and Psyche. He answers that he could not fulfil the order himself, and would look to France to provide him with the paper. If they did not have a paper that fitted the order, he would have to apply to an English artist to provide the design, but the cost would be a lot higher. Thus the questioner suggests that a knowledge of art is more widespread in France (i.e. it is not specialist knowledge limited to fine artists) and Mr. Crabb agrees. To reiterate the problem Crabb states that both in design and execution of the design the English are inferior to the French.

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<sup>108</sup> SC q. 1011, p. 72.

The witness then shows the Committee a drawing of his own. This was done from an engraved outline of the Elgin Marbles, which he enlarged and corrected by visiting the objects themselves in the British Museum. He believes that this sort of ornament is increasingly popular and wishes that he had more opportunities to continue his study of this type, and in so doing, he believes he would attract orders from "...gentlemen of taste".<sup>109</sup> The questioner asks about the extent of the influence of designs such as those found in Pompeii, and the witness suggests that, if the design of such a style was less expensive, the taste would be more widespread. However, he suggests that with no formal education in proportion, he has to slowly copy the entire engraving of the Elgin Marbles, before enlarging the pattern. Thus if he had to produce a large portion of the horses and human figures, it would be more expensive because he would have to undergo this lengthy process. This would not be necessary if he had received proper training and could render these proportions with ease (and without necessarily copying them). Thus, although Crabb believes that the use of these papers would be extensive as a version of bas relief below a frieze or in recesses on stairways, the cost of production is out of proportion to the price one could ask for a piece, for all but the wealthiest customers.

The witness is then asked about the relationship of wallpaper manufactures to that of the calico printers. Are patterns exchanged between the two industries? Crabb states that they are, but that copying designs from calico directly is not allowed.

When asked about the lack of instruction in architecture, the witness suggests that there is a lack of education in all branches of decoration and he produces a design done by one of the first decorative artists, a Mr. Jones. He shows how there are inaccuracies in his copying and reduction of another pattern that

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<sup>109</sup> SC q. 1032, p. 73.



demonstrate his lack of architectural education, among other things. In a sense, a designer is shackled by a lack of education:

And is it your opinion that schools or institutions liberally established for the purpose of instructing persons like yourself in the correct principles of design, and in extending their knowledge of the arts, would be very beneficial to them? – I consider it would, by enabling them to express their ideas with freedom.<sup>110</sup>

The questioning is then centred around the specimens of French and English design that the witness has brought with him. Crabb states that although the French designs may not be directly copied, because they are far superior in terms of perspective (particularly in the example of a design for a domed ceiling), then they are used as a guide for British designers, who have no other education. When asked to define the best elements of French design the witness states that there is a correctness and superiority in drawing skills, that there is an elegance of lines and the colour is more correct and varied. Furthermore, in the knowledge and rendering of natural subjects, the French excel. This is highlighted when the witness produces two flower borders, one French (from Paris), one British. He is asked to outline why he considers the former one superior to that produced in England. Crabb pinpoints both the accuracy of botanical knowledge – the English pattern has leaves that are not from the same plant as the flowers – as well as the contrast, combination and brilliancy of the colours used in the French design.

The questioning moves on to analysing the instruction that Crabb feels would be necessary to improve the colour usage of the British designer. He states that there are certain principles of colour combination that he does not know in any depth but that he feels would be an important part of instruction in design.<sup>111</sup> He believes that there must be such instruction in France, judging from the results which he believes are akin to the use of colour in fine art painting.

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<sup>110</sup> SC q. 1043, p. 73.

<sup>111</sup> "...[T]here are certain qualities of colours which must be used in certain places, in order to produce a good and judicious effect" (SC q. 1061, pp. 74-75).

Fundamentally, Mr. Crabb believes that there is no lack of natural talent, but that the opportunities for study are not given to the British workforce, thus they are far less educated than the French (from the evidence of their production, Crabb has never been to France). He believes that if the British workers could have an early education in human anatomy, animals, architecture, botany and colour combining, this inferiority would be avoided. He notes that there are plenty of texts that could help, but these are shut up in private libraries, and do not therefore have an influence on the designer. He also suggests the opening of botanical gardens for the study of natural forms and an easy access to museums (with exhibits like birds) from six to eight in the morning, when the workers could attend. Crabb states that although he has never applied to the Trustees of the British Museum about such morning access, if he had had to do a design based on the Elgin Marbles, he would have found that hour of entry very necessary. However, he does not believe permission would have been granted.

The questioner asks about the extent and knowledge of embossing and ornamenting leather, for rooms. Crabb states that he has no knowledge in that area, and this is indicative of the general lack of understanding of these techniques in the country as a whole. The knowledge of this form of production has been lost, and perhaps may never have been extensive in Britain (apart from in publishing) as it was understood principally in Holland in the past.

In conclusion, Crabb states that although taste has improved in some cases, and there is a great demand for wall papers, taste is not as fine as it should be. If this was generally improved, then standards would rise both in the commissioning of work and the production of it. He finishes by reiterating that an easily-accessed gallery would be a great advantage.

**21 August 1835 James Skene Esq., qq. 1100-1216, pp. 77-88**



James Skene has been the secretary for the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures in Scotland for five years. He is also the secretary for the Royal Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland. The witness has an extensive knowledge of the issues surrounding design for manufactures because he studied and lived on the Continent for some years, attending a design academy. Since moving back to Britain, he has travelled to the Continent on numerous occasions and has a great interest in art.

The Committee asks him to outline the history and details of the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures in Scotland. Skene obliges by outlining its institution at the time of the Union between England and Scotland in 1707.<sup>112</sup> This event provided an excess of funds from payment due to Scotland by England as part of the Union agreement. With this money the Board was established with the plan that £ 2 000 should be provided every year for a period of seven years. However, this obligation seems never to have been fulfilled and it was only in 1727 that the organisation was established and the arrears were paid. This consisted of £ 14 000 (seven years of £ 2 000), plus an additional sum of £ 6 000 which was considered to be arrears arising from the money that would have derived from a property purchase. From this date on, £ 2 000 was then paid to support the Board. The organisation is financially very secure and has investments in various businesses.<sup>113</sup> The Board has also built the Royal Institution in Edinburgh where the Royal Society, the Royal Institution for the Encouragement of Arts and the Antiquarian Society, as well as the Board itself, is housed. From this, the organisation receives £ 740 in rent per annum. In addition

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<sup>112</sup> The date give in 1807, but his seems to be a clerk's mistake, particularly as the date that is supposed to be later is given as 1727 (SC q. 1102, p. 77).

<sup>113</sup> "...[T]hey have the sum of £ 30 000 at present in the hands of the Water Company of Edinburgh, for which they receive the interest; they have 15 000 *l.* in the hands of Mr. Innis, of Lochlash, also yielding interest; they have a sum of £ 1 000 in the hands of the town of Edinburgh, which at present yields no interest, as the town is bankrupt" (SC q. 1103, p. 77).

to these details, the witness submits a more detailed outline of income and expenditure that is printed in the Select Committee proceedings.<sup>114</sup>

The main way in which the Board extends a knowledge of design to the population is through a school for drawing that was established seventy years ago and is still running. This was instigated by the Board's observation that the Continental education system was giving an advantage to foreign manufacturers, by extending a training in design. The school does not ask a fee for attendance, and selects pupils from all over the country. In order to do this, the students must present their work, a certificate to guarantee that their masters will support them and a document outlining their good character. This last consideration is particularly important, according to the witness. The school accepts forty pupils (recruiting five times a year) and has one teacher. The first was a talented French artist, Monsieur De La Croix, and has since had an eminent series of tutors; the present being a Mr. William Allen, who is the first Scottish tutor and was himself trained at the academy.

The questioning asks what areas the students are involved in after training and Skene lists many areas including engraving, art, house-painting, statuary sculpture, coach-painting and manufacture. He notes that "...there is not an eminent name in the history of art connected with Scotland where the individual has not been educated at the academy" and names Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Barnet and Mr. Wilson as examples.<sup>115</sup>

The questioning moves to the subject of branch schools and the witness notes that there has been a school, funded by the Board and connected to the institution in Edinburgh. This was in Dumfermline and it was established expressly to teach pattern drawing for the textile industry in that area. He notes that there was a marked improvement in output from the linen trade there but that the school

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<sup>114</sup> SC q. 1104, p. 78.



closed last year due to a lack of local sponsorship. The original agreement for the school had been that it would be partly funded by the Board (£ 50) and an equal amount donated by local manufacture. However, although several businesses continued to sponsor the institution, many dropped out and the financial burden of the academy was too great. Thus, although the manufacturers benefited from the institution, they were unwilling to financially support it. Since that has closed, Skene is not aware of any other similar schools and he notes that there are none in Glasgow, Kilmarnock or Paisley.

With the introduction of Paisley, the questioning moves onto the state of the shawl trade that is concentrated in that area. The witness reports that until last year, it was very successful, however with the introduction of French shawls, sales and thus production has dropped dramatically. It is the manufacturers themselves who blamed the foreign imports for the loss of business. When asked whether the strong competition from the French is due to the superiority of the design of the shawls, Skene notes that although the French shawls are copies of Indian designs (and therefore by intimation are not original), he has heard that even these copies are done better than the authentic patterns. This would appear to be due to the concentration of education in that area. The witness is aware of a school in Paris which teaches at least seventy pupils solely in the design of shawls, by a tutor who is published on the subject. By contrast, there is no school in Paisley the he is aware of. The witness is then asked about the Mechanics' Institute in Edinburgh but this is a subject he is not familiar with. However he does note, relating to the previous subject, that the Board of Trustees, being aware of the deficiency in training, have sent an artist to study the teaching of patterns for manufacture in Paris so that the principles may be introduced in the Edinburgh academy.

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<sup>115</sup> *SC* q. 1108, p. 79. Examples listed in qq. 1111-1112, p. 79.

Skene is then asked about his more general ideas on establishing a series of schools for design, and he believes that this would be beneficial and that there should be a central institution. The main school, he envisages, would have a regular curriculum from which branch schools might offer specialisation, depending on the different manufactures. Skene agrees with the questioner that this central institution should be connected to the most recent developments in manufacture. However, he also notes that the central school must teach basic skills before the students can be expected to specialise. These he outlines as instruction often neglected, except in the Royal Academy and the academy of the Board of Trustees – that is, drawing from the round and drawing from objects in order to study the principles of outline and modelling (so learning about light and shade). This is what the French academies teach and only after this is learnt, suggests the witness, can real progress be made. From the following question, the witness reiterates this point:

And, in fact, is it not true that in correctness of drawing the human figure, and in the knowledge of proportions, we are very deficient? – Very much so in general; and on that account I would make it a rule of that establishment, that the first class should be that one in which instruction is given in chalk drawing on a large scale from the round, having a series of second classes where the different branches connected with the useful arts were taught, which covers very many; architecture and all other branches connected with the useful arts, ornamenting, decorative, house-painters, and so on.<sup>116</sup>

Skene agrees with the questioner that these fundamental principles (“...correctness of design...”) are essential. He also notes that with very little difficulty, there could also be lectures on anatomy, botany, chemistry, colouring and optics.<sup>117</sup> This he suggests is necessary because, as opposed to foreign pattern drawers, “...there is a very great defect in general in our patterns, in

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<sup>116</sup> SC q. 1129, p. 81.

<sup>117</sup> SC q. 1130, p. 81.



botanical accuracy, where flowers are introduced...".<sup>118</sup> These, along with a third teaching group for people who choose to be artists, illustrate for the Committee how the witness would sub-divide instruction.

In response to the questioner who asks whether it is important that students who have arrived at the school to study casting in bronze or iron, or pattern-drawing should be allowed to concentrate on this specialism, Skene replies that this should be given priority. He comments that it is all too easy for academies (including that of the Board of Trustees) to fall into the habit of training pupils only for the higher branches of art, and this does not provide a student with any specialised, applicable knowledge to manufactures:

In fact, is it not true that it is an exceedingly dangerous thing to pursue, in such institutions, those portions of art which may be said to be connected with individual taste or individual genius, since the tendency of so pursuing them must be to neglect those portions of art which are positive and true, and founded upon unvarying principles of art? – Yes.<sup>119</sup>

Skene believes that this concentration on the higher branches of art, as opposed to those associated with manufactures would be in some way prevented by their being divisions in classes. If a first class that all students must go through was established, teaching the fundamental principles, then after this initial education, students could drop out, go onto manufactures, or to higher art. However, the witness does note that in Scotland, this scheme has resulted in the majority of students following the fine art division, even though their initial intention was to go into manufactures. Thus sub-dividing classes would need to have strict rules in order that students could not deviate from their original choice.

The questioning turns to the expense of running schools. Skene suggests that the academy in Edinburgh is run on very moderate means. The teacher receives £ 150 a year, his assistant £ 50 and there a additional running costs (light and heat) and

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<sup>118</sup> *ibid.*

some other minor expenses, but ultimately there is little else to consider. For branch schools if there were to be some established, he considers that £ 100 for a tutor would be enough, but he does stress to the Committee that a constant form of supervision would be necessary. So, although a teacher may not be constantly instructing, he would be advising and correcting errors; students also learn from their fellows.

Skene agrees that the conditions of any central and branch schools concerning the proceedings, the number of pupils, teachers, accounts and funds should be made public, and submitted as a report to Parliament every year. The Board of Trustees prepare such a document which is presented to the Treasury (although not made to Parliament as a whole).

The improvement in pattern drawing has been encouraged by the Board of Trustees through prize giving for the best designs. This, over a period of two to three years, has seen a marked improvement. However, the witness notes that there is one major deficiency: No matter how beautiful the design, the pattern is not always possible to translate into manufactures, because the designer has no understanding of the weaving process. Skene does not believe this knowledge of design and the application of the design to the loom need to be separate roles, but that the artist, as in France, should be conversant with the manufacturing techniques. Through this knowledge, the French designer gains profitably. However, this is allied with a copyright system, that protects the design (and manufacturer) during the period of production. In France this is generally a year (although the period of protection is dependent on the goods) and allows the manufacturer and designer a period when they are assured that the new design may not be copied. Skene comments that this is not the case in Britain and thus manufacturers cannot afford to employ designers of this standard, since the money invested in a design will be lost through piracy. The witness believes that

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<sup>119</sup> SC q. 1134, p. 81.



any form of education would be useless unless accompanied by a better system of copyright. However, he has not considered a possible system in any detail, although he presumes that for items demanding a shorter period of protection, it would be necessary to establish regional registers.

On the subject of colours, Skene believes that British design is very deficient. This is particularly evident if one compares French designs with British copies where a change has been attempted in the copy. Usually, according to the witness, this has exposed a lack of understanding of the rules of harmonious colour, which Skene suggests are actually quite simple. In terms of dyes generally he states that the French are superior, although they do have different classes of dye, some permanent and some not. The export market tends to be the brilliant, but non-permanent colours. However the Swiss, he claims, are excellent dyers. However, he does believe that there has been some improvement in dyeing (and a little in pattern-drawing) encouraged by the premiums given by the Board.

The questioning turns to the role of the Board of Trustees in addressing the problems of design in manufacture. Skene notes that this is of the highest priority to the Board since they are aware that "...it is obvious to every one that in point of excellency of workmanship the British manufacturers have risen to the highest pitch; it is only in the taste of design in which they are deficient...".<sup>120</sup> The Board, though low in funds, is hoping to address this issue by the winter, although the details of this are not discussed.

Skene is asked whether it may be advantageous to link institutions that deal with surgery and botany, so that students would benefit from anatomical and botanical study. He suggests that it would be very useful. He comments that this precise botanical knowledge is evident in France, where pattern-makers draw directly from the actual flowers, and their design is therefore correct. This is in opposition

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<sup>120</sup> SC q. 1157, p. 83.

to British pattern-drawers, who often use travel books where the details of flowers and foliage may be incorrect. Instead of having professors, this may indeed be a solution to providing that type of instruction, Skene suggests.

Concerning the prizes offered by the Board, the witness outlines three types. Firstly, there are six prizes given for ornamental drawings, then there are six prizes for drawing from the round. These awards are both drawn from a fund of 24 *l.* per year and in the categories, students must supply their first drawings and their last drawings so that a judgement may be made on their progress. These examples are then kept by the Board and exhibited to the public. The third range of prizes are those connected more directly to manufactures. These are varied, depending on demand. Premiums are given only to support the introduction of a process which must then support itself. These awards have sponsored developments in the linen and woollen trade, particularly carpets which had not been widespread manufacture in Scotland. Also the shawl trade has benefited and support was given to such schemes as the development of the spinning of a yarn, that had always been imported from France previously. Because of funding, suppliers in Glasgow and Leeds now produce the yarn, where only French manufacturers could before. Because this was such a useful scheme for the country, this project received the highest ever premium awarded by the Board – £ 300.

The premium for the carpets was awarded to support the use of Scotch wool in manufacture that is not usually used as the process normally utilises a finer wool, like that from England, Saxony and elsewhere. This supported scheme employed a system that made imitation Turkish carpets and later also made imitation Persian carpets, and has greatly increased the manufacture of carpets in Scotland. The company was also funded for other innovations such as imitating French tapestry-made carpets and the use of cow-hair in carpet production. This latter process which was funded for three years, utilised labour in goals and correction-



houses, and supplied a range of carpets that were ideal for areas where wear is high, such as lobbies and shops. The witness reveals that it was a scheme he had initiated, after seeing cow-hair used in carpet manufacture in Flanders. However, although this improvement would seem to be more about construction than design Skene claims that, being a new process, it has drawn the attention from designers.

Skene is asked about the difference between French and Scottish designs for carpets. The witness notes that French design was tapestry carpets (groups of flowers on a dark background) but that these have been copied by the Scottish. This imitation of French design has also been accompanied by an improvement in the use of colour. Previously there had been a very limited colour range used by the English manufacturers particularly, now the Scottish are able to weave with fourteen colours. The man responsible for the improvement is called Whitock and “[i]n that respect and in the circumstance of design, and the beauty of execution, I think he stands preeminent”.<sup>121</sup> The same manufacturer has also introduced the French velvet carpet which he had a patent for, but sold this right to an English production house.

The witness agrees with the questioner that to have a central dépôt for collecting design (for manufacture) from different parts of the world where teaching would take place, would be beneficial. Thus, the questioner continues, the information about wool that Skene has just described, (or the instance of a special mixture of gold in jpanning) would be available for students in this central repository. In fact, suggests the witness, he was planning this sort of institution with the Board of Trustees, but the funding has not been available.

Four years ago, the Royal Institution in Scotland was conjoined to the Board of Trustees. This has been helpful to the academy as the resources such as the

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<sup>121</sup> SC q. 1116, pp. 85-86.

library and the gallery, that are owned by the Institution have been utilised by the students of the drawing school. The gallery collection is not large but has been carefully selected and consists of many good old masters paintings. There is also a gallery of casts (numbering about a hundred) which were acquired directly from Lord Elgin and include the Elgin marbles and other casts made from buildings while in Greece. The gallery is open to the public on certain occasions, but is always available to the academy students. This collection is one of only two galleries that the witness is aware of – the other is in Glasgow. More institutions should be opened of this type, Skene agrees with the questioning, and they should be open when the labouring classes can take advantage of them. However, the witness sees a problem in this when in the winter, there is very little light, although with some expenditure, this could be overcome. Fundamentally Skene's thoughts on this issue are:

[t]o the facilities that occur abroad of exhibition of works of art, I attribute very much the proficiency that exists in foreign countries in the knowledge of design, and in the higher scale of taste that exists among the middling classes of society abroad, compared to what it is in this country, for here it seems to be confined to the higher class alone almost.<sup>122</sup>

The witness is asked whether there is any opportunity for exhibitions of manufactures. He suggests that the idea was discussed but that manufacturers were reluctant to show designs and new technologies because of the issue of copyright, i.e. it does not provide satisfactory protection from piracy. However there has been an exhibition of the awards winning carpets and silks that the Board of Trustees has sponsored. This is based on the competition for premiums awarded by the institution and the exhibition resulting from that. Manufacturers take advantage of the exhibition in order to publish their work in an official arena. The event has grown considerably in the last five years. However the display is open to the public for only about three weeks, immediately after the premiums are awarded, and the goods are sold. This is only in the last two weeks of the

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<sup>122</sup> SC q. 1197, p. 87.



show and Skene agrees with the questioner that it would be more beneficial if the exhibition was open for longer. However, the goods are usually bought by traders in Edinburgh and they are eager to get the goods into full scale production and into retail outlets. This situation has previously prevented the Board of Trustees from keeping the display for longer. He thinks that the exhibition in principle is very beneficial and is asked in general about other displays of manufactured goods. He notes that the French Exposition is a very important event and "...it enjoys a very great advantage over any attempt in this country".<sup>123</sup> It is a display of manufactures and technology and the businesses in France prepare for it every year – they know that they are safe to display the work in this official exhibition. (A much more detailed description and outline of the benefits of this French event have been provided for the Committee and are printed in Appendix 1).

In the exhibition by the Board of Trustees the premiums are awarded for material technology, patterns and inventions. However, Skene intimates that although there are premiums for certain items, such as machinery, the lack of copyright often prevents these categories being filled. The winners of premiums are usually educated in the academy, however the influence of the academy has not spread abroad, as pattern drawing is not treated as a major part of the education. In short, there seems to be no interchange between French and Scottish designers.

**21 August 1835 John B. Papworth Esq., qq. 1217-1319, pp. 88-95**

John B. Papworth is an architect (10 Caroline Street, Bedford Square, London) who, having trained in general architecture, has paid particular attention to ornamental design. However, he does not believe that this is encouraged enough and that the emphasis lies with painting, sculpture and architecture generally. He suggests that this is due to the lack of copyright that makes any investment in the

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<sup>123</sup> SC q. 1204, p. 88.

work of a good artist redundant as the design can be copied by anyone without fear of punishment. In contrast to the Continent, there is no school for instruction in design and thus any manufacturer working in gold or silver, for example, must always apply to the most highly trained artists. If there was a more widespread education in design, this would not be necessary. In France, design for interiors is therefore much cheaper because the designers that are employed are trained at national schools, and are not the higher grade of fine artist. Fundamentally, when asked about the two sources of inferiority of design in Britain, i.e. a lack of design education and a lack of copyright, Papworth comments that the latter is a far greater problem. Because of the inadequacy of existing protection laws, architects are unable to find good designs for ornamenting interiors and exteriors, despite the considerable artistic talent in the country.

Papworth is therefore asked whether he has given much attention to the issue of copyright and has any suggestions for its improvement. He answers that he has considered the problem and that a protecting law would be the best means and he couples this with the suggestion that there should be a repository of models of excellent design both old and new. The study of the examples in this institution would provide an ideal education but would be take a long period:

Then if he [a designer] were encouraged to proceed by knowing he should be paid for that which he published, he would employ his talent, or it would find employment; but feeling he shall not be remunerated because ornamental art is not adequately protected, he does not sufficiently cultivate it, and the public loses the benefit of his talents.<sup>124</sup>

Furthermore, because of lack of educational facilities, a designer also has less opportunity to devote time to researching those subjects that are beneficial to understand.

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<sup>124</sup> SC q. 1231, p. 89.



The manufacturing areas that call upon the use of artists are gold and silver, ornamental furniture, metal, carving and ornamental glass, china and house decoration. But there has been less demand for artists due to the expense. Papworth believes that the use of skilled artists is visible in the production of the last twenty-five years in Britain. In contrast to the continent Papworth understands that although many works in gold and silver have been created by great artists, generally the manufacturers use designers who they employ directly. The witness also considers that although in our best designs we are equal to the foreign production in gold and silver (that have been designed by fine artists), we do not have the best chasers [embossers/engravers?] and the actual castings of the metal are coarse.

The situation is similar when comparing the ornamental furniture manufacture of England and France. In England, a young man who has been a carver or shown some talent, will begin to design furniture, despite having no formal education. This is different from France where furniture designers are professionally trained. On this point the questioner comments:

In fact art comes down more into the manufacturing workshop in France than it does in England? – Considerably more; they seem to have an art of

design in employment, perfectly in union with their manufactures; in fact art dwells with manufacture more in France than in England.<sup>125</sup>

Papworth is then asked to comment on glass, china and house decoration and he notes that in glass there have been some major advancements in Britain, although these have been in small quantities and in partnership with artists. But in china and house decoration, the witness agrees with the questioner, that there is a real need for improvement in design. If the situation was improved and a knowledge of art was extended to the work force, not only would design be improved, but people's taste and therefore need for that design would increase. We would also have less need to import goods from other countries.

The questioning then turns to pattern-drawers who are employed not only in the calico industry, but also in paper staining, silk manufacture, carpet making as well as other areas. Papworth does not consider that these class of designers show any originality or knowledge of art. They rely on foreign production for all their designs, although sometimes they are not even employed but manufacturers would rather import the foreign goods themselves. Imagine a pattern on silk, the witness suggests to the Committee, if it is deemed a good pattern, the design goes straight to all manufacturers and no designer from Britain is employed to construct it.

Manufacturers require above all a copyright law, but they also require instruction in design. Papworth states that he has heard manufacturers complain that there is no help in improving design in Britain, and that they are aware that their design is lacking in "...judgment, accuracy of drawing, and in knowledge of and arrangement of colour".<sup>126</sup> However, again he reiterates that there is no point in having a great artist to remedy the problem, if manufacturers lose out to their own dishonest work force who steal a design which was expensive to carve and

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<sup>125</sup> SC q. 1243, p. 90.

<sup>126</sup> SC q. 1253, p. 91.



destined to be cast in silver, for example, and instead cast it in lead or iron and sell it much more cheaply. This is very common, the witness notes, and affects all areas of ornamental design, including architectural.

As regards copyright, Papworth states that a law would be needed as well as a panel to judge the invention of particular designs. He notes that there are laws to protect complete piracy of a carved bust, for example. However, if a bust was carved with a Roman robe on it and the bust was copied, but the robe was removed, this would only constitute partial piracy for which there is no protection. Furthermore, what protection laws there are, are expensive to employ and therefore manufacturers are often put off from using them. Papworth agrees with the questioner therefore, that taking action against the piracy of design should be cheaper. In concluding the discussion of copyright laws, the witness does agree that the case of partial piracy would be difficult to uphold, as well as having a negative effect on the cause of invention in art. What if it was extended to any designer combining similar types of foliage for example, Papworth notes that the protection laws should only be brought into action if both the design and the construction of it were copied.

The questioning moves on to discuss the affects of a lack of copyright and the witness pinpoints this particularly as being the adoption of a particular style. This, he claims is the mistakenly called the Louis XIV style, however it is actually the Louis XV patterning. On this, he comments:

The absence of protection has induced manufacturers to seek a style of ornament capable of being executed with facility by workmen unpossessed of theoretical knowledge, and without practical accuracy...in which grotesque varieties are substituted for classic design; and it is admitted that designers and workmen of very mediocre talents are preferred to better artists in this kind of work, for it is little amenable to

the criticism of the judicious, and the workmen are usually free from the trammels of artist-like education.<sup>127</sup>

The witness goes on to outline the difference between the two styles (showing two small prints of different styles) and explain how one became confused with the other. In the early reign of Louis XIV, the Roman style (like that studied by Michelangelo) was considered by the emperor to be too plain. He demanded a more sumptuous design and so the Italian styles were made more flamboyant. However, this was copied by bad workmen and a type of it that employed a “grotesque scroll” became the mainstream version of the style.<sup>128</sup> The simplicity and lack of training needed to produce this style has contributed to its popularity amongst manufacturers, Papworth agrees with the questioner. It has “...long usurped the place of true art”.<sup>129</sup> The witness is aware that the French have introduced a rival style that the questioner describes as “...the style of the Renaissance, or the early style which prevailed when the arts again began to dawn in Italy”, but Papworth has not seen this design yet.<sup>130</sup>

He is then asked to articulate what he considers to be “...the classic or pure style of art”. To which he answers:

Such works in ornamental art as were executed by the Grecians, Romans and Italians, and which have long been accredited as the offspring of high and cultivated taste, and as practised by Michael Angelo and Collini, as designed by Le Pautre and others, and given in valuable documents by Piranessi [sic.]; this style is almost lost to this country and to its manufactures.<sup>131</sup>

When asked whether he had considered ways in which this loss could be restored, he explains that for the last year and a half, he and other professional men have established the Institute of British architects which has the same concerns as the

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<sup>127</sup> SC q. 1264, p. 92. Later the questioner notes that “...the flowing outline [is] capable of being executed by people who have no freedom whatever of hand...” (SC q. 1271, p.92).

<sup>128</sup> SC q. 1269, p. 92.

<sup>129</sup> SC q. 1275, p. 92.

<sup>130</sup> SC q. 1270, p. 92.



present Committee. The Institute aim to improve design by creating a collection of antiques, and offering rewards to those who not only copy the antiques, but rather who "...compose new designs in that spirit".<sup>132</sup> Although the institute will not form a school, there will be lectures for the young members to attend in order to improve their drawing and modelling skills. Perhaps instruction will develop but any formal instigation from the Committee will be extremely beneficial and will affect manufactures throughout the country. Although Papworth has not given much thought to the actual type of instruction necessary, he does note that drawing and modelling would seem to be essential.

When asked which was the superior, French or English design, Papworth answered that French design was far superior and that he agreed it would be beneficial to have a teaching institution, specifically for design in manufactures, but he had not given any thought to the instruction that would take place in such a place. He also agreed that it was important to have museums and collections of fine casts. Particularly an annual exhibition for the benefit of artists in London, Edinburgh and Dublin. The questioner notes that there is already such a collection in the British museum, but Papworth makes a differentiation. He notes that the exhibition he suggests should be for the display of ornamental design such as vases, casts, bronzes and architecture. He continues:

...for one of the events to be feared of an exhibition is, that by those higher departments of art, where human figures are the chief matter, young men might be tempted to leave the intended object to pursue that which is more accredited and honoured, and to the disadvantage of the manufacturing arts.<sup>133</sup>

Although the questioner suggests that there has been an improvement in ornamental decoration in houses both externally and internally, the witness is not

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<sup>131</sup> SC q. 1276, p. 92.

<sup>132</sup> SC q. 1277, p. 93.

<sup>133</sup> SC q. 1286, p. 93.

in agreement. He claims that because it is almost impossible to find good and inexpensive designers, that fine buildings are often left without the ornamentation that should accompany their structure. Mr. Papworth is then asked whether the instigation of the Institute of British architects was due to the need for this type of ornamental training. He replies that it was not but that it was for the promotion of architectural knowledge and "...the different branches of science connected therewith; for establishing an uniformity of practice, and maintaining a high respectability of character in the members of the profession".<sup>134</sup> However, he notes that now the Institute has received a great deal of financial support, it has also turned its attention to the art of design. The questioner implies that there is a crossover with the Institute and the teaching at the Royal Academy, but the witness replies that there are no ornamental design lectures, only instruction on drawing the human figure, painting and perspective.

Papworth is then asked about Percier and Fontaine and he agrees with the questioner that they have been instrumental in improving the taste of design and thus can be used as an example of the affect of good design for ornamental manufacture.

On the subject of china manufacture, the witness finds that the British are inferior to foreign manufacture, particularly that of Germany. This is due he believes to the manufacturers employing no one who has a knowledge of "...elegant form and beautiful proportions".<sup>135</sup> Thus he concludes, instruction in design would be extremely affective in this manufacturing area.

The limitations on invention in architecture are then discussed. These relate primarily to the duty on bricks and window tax. Papworth agrees that if the production of brick shape was not restricted then this would allow greater freedom. He describes this in poetic style as the ability of "...the material of

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<sup>134</sup> SC q. 1289, p. 94.



which brick and tile is composed...[as being] capable of receiving an impressment of mind".<sup>136</sup> Thus, although bricks for basic building are an excellent shape, the invention apparent in Lombardy would be used in England. Secondly window tax in the way it limits the design of the windows of a building is similarly restrictive. Furthermore, this expense of the material prevents manufacturers developing coloured glass for architecture. The questioner sums up this line of questioning by stating that the "...poverty and monotony of our buildings in London may be traced to that source", to which the witness agrees.<sup>137</sup>

Papworth comments on interiors and the relation of furnishings to architecture. He notes that although Percier and Fontaine do design their interiors, generally speaking architects do not in this country and instead they leave the furnishings to employees who are less educated. This results in a poor state of furnishing generally and, as in other areas, there is a need for more 'clever designers'.<sup>138</sup> However in drapery, British design is often superior to that of the French in the same area, but this knowledge and ability is often restricted to a small number of people and thus, the area is still in need of more instruction.

Finally the witness is asked about the public taste and he states that it is far behind that of the French. He claims that it is important that if there is going to be some improvement, there should be a knowledge of the principles of art amongst people in charge of supervising public building. Apart from this point, Papworth has no other statement to make, except that he agrees generally with Mr. Skene, whose evidence he had previously heard.

**28 August 1835, Charles Robert Cockerell Esq. 1428-1481, pp. 101-107**

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<sup>135</sup> SC q. 1294, p. 94.

<sup>136</sup> SC q. 1298, p. 94.

<sup>137</sup> SC35 q. 1304, p. 94.

<sup>138</sup> SC35 q. 1310, p. 95.

Charles Robert Cockerell is an architect and associate of the Royal Academy, and is particularly known for his work on the Bank of England.<sup>139</sup> Cockerell is particularly concerned to point out the changes within the trade of ornamental architecture, and he makes the point that:

I apprehend that the system of cast-work and mechanical process has displaced the florid and more elaborate style of our ornamental work; and I believe that the attempt to supersede the work of the mind and hand by mechanical process for the sake of economy, will always have the effect of degrading and ultimately ruining art.<sup>140</sup>

He explains that under the old system, a workman was apprenticed from childhood in the art of ornamental plaster work but that now there are no workmen to be found in Britain. Though there are a few still in Ireland, he notes that his architectural practice has been affected and that there is such a “...paucity of hands” that he has relied on a few workers over the years of his practice – these were Mr. Bernasconi until 1820, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Nicol, and they also employed an ornamental painter, Mr. Dixon, but that has been discontinued. Later the witness notes that they can charge a high price because there are so few of them. However, Cockerell is optimistic, and he notes that “[w]ithin the last few years... an improvement has taken place, from more universal acquaintance with fine examples on the Continent, the prosperity of the times, great competition and other causes”.<sup>141</sup> He suggests this improvement to the “...introduction of mechanical art, generally termed polygraphic, as for instance, all kinds of papering”, particularly the wallpaper with historical and landscape subjects.<sup>142</sup>

Cockerell considers that Britain’s isolation from the Continent has created a deficiency of taste in both the manufacturers and the public in Britain. He suggests that there are two ways of improving this, firstly by creating more

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<sup>139</sup> This was a building he completed after the death of Sir John Soane, who began the work.

<sup>140</sup> SC35 q. 1431, p. 101.

<sup>141</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> SC35 q. 1432, p. 101.



employment, and secondly by encouraging the public to be interested in art, which would therefore encourage the ambition of ordinary people. He notes:

In this commercial country wealth is apt to be considered the supreme desideratum, and if the artist unites calculation and conduct in business with excellence of talent, he at length becomes a tradesman, seeing no prospect of reward. Of course this observation applies especially to arts connected with trade and manual labour.<sup>143</sup>

Cockerell is particularly vocal about the state of manufactures in Britain since he has lived for many years on the Continent. He notes that as an Englishman abroad the state of British architectural decoration, bronze, steel, plate, iron, papering and china,<sup>144</sup> has made him regret that there is little instruction as regards design in factories and that, furthermore, the Government appears to have no interest and offer no support to a subject that: "...concerns the honour and character of England as respects arts, and which is of paramount commercial and national importance in a manufacturing country, where the cultivation of taste only is wanting to give us the superiority of the world".<sup>145</sup>

Cockerell considers that the key problem is the absence of an understanding of what he terms "...the principles of design" by manufacturers.<sup>146</sup> He claims that the main system by which firms 'design' is through the use of pattern books, where manufacturers will piece together designs from various publications, sometimes buying up the rare texts to secure their authorship over a pattern. He gives the example of the Duke of Northumberland who paid a lot of money for the decoration of his house in Charing Cross, in the Grecian style. The witness notes that the workmen who were involved in this had problems producing the magnificence that was required.

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<sup>143</sup> SC35 q. 1438, p. 102.

<sup>144</sup> "...brass works, applying to balustrades, furniture of doors, grates, stoves, plate, cutlery, and similar works done at Birmingham, which an architect is often called on to direct" (SC35 q. 1440, p. 102).

<sup>145</sup> SC35 q. 1439, p. 102.

<sup>146</sup> SC35 q. 1440, p. 102.

The witness is then asked what he considers to be the advantage that French manufacturers have over British ones in the area of porcelain. Cockerell explains that in the design of form, decoration and particularly colouring the French in particular are better designers, and this skill in colouring is in many areas of decoration such as "...the painting of flowers, history or landscape".<sup>147</sup> The questioner asks the architect to give more detail regarding this and Cockerell suggests that:

First of all, I conceive the beauty of the porcelain must depend upon its form, and its contrivance; for instance, the works of China, in which we see animals introduced, not only with a view to ornament, but for real utility, as handles, feet, &c., as also in the antique vessels in pottery or bronze, we constantly observe an admirable adjustment of such useful and ornamental portions of the work, full of taste and meaning; and, secondly, the beauty of porcelain must depend upon the arrangement of the design, and colours painted upon it.<sup>148</sup>

When asked about the production of porcelain in France, particularly the Sèvres firm and the manufactories around Paris, Cockerell notes that they are a particularly telling example of design in the country. This is because the company of Sèvres in particular employ well-known artists such as the artists who was the miniaturist for Napoleon and a friend of Cockerell, Mr. Isabey.<sup>149</sup> He noted also that although not all the artists that were as famous as his friend, that there were some fine artists who he had met at the Academy of Rome who worked in manufacture "...without much fame in the upper branches, but their skill honourably employed in assisting various manufactures".<sup>150</sup>

The witness is asked to pursue this point further and he notes that the Government had supported these French artists that had gone from France to Rome to study. Although this sounds position, Cockerell goes on to suggest that

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<sup>147</sup> SC35 q. 1443, p. 102.

<sup>148</sup> SC35 q. 1445, pp. 102-3.

<sup>149</sup> This was Jean-Baptiste Isabey.



these artists became victims of the academic system that was founded under Louis XIV. This meant that they worked by rule, which allowed them little freedom. He notes that Monsieur Vernet has complained about this stifling situation in the present period.

Again, Cockerell is asked to compare the French and British in relation to porcelain manufacture. The witness suggests that the French are more superior in design because they concentrate on the "...higher sources of design" for their inspiration in manufacture. However, Cockerell does not believe that that this problem with British design is due to a lack of natural talent amongst the British workers. Rather he suggests that there is a "...want of opportunity of obtaining more correct knowledge of design".<sup>151</sup> When asked to sum up on this comparison in manufactures, the witness suggests that:

I apprehend that the object of legislation on this subject must be the multiplication of industry and commerce, as well as to give splendour and do honour to the country. The Governments of the Continent have been always better and more systematically directed to arts and manufactures than by our own scattered endeavours, especially in the higher departments, by establishment of professors of archaeology furnishing the learning necessary, academies providing accomplished hands, by premiums on manufactures, direction of some of them, by exhibitions of art of all ages gratuitously, thus diffusing taste through every class of society from the manufacturer to the purchaser. The result on my mind has been, a conviction of the necessity of such means in this country as they have on the Continent, which, superadded to the capital and industry of this country, would give us the superiority over every other in arts and manufactures.<sup>152</sup>

Cockerell is particularly concerned about the differences in the opportunities for the working classes as regards learning about art, and he compares this situation in the Continent, as opposed to Britain. He notes that in comparison to the artisans of Sheffield, Birmingham and Glasgow, the workers in France have the

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<sup>150</sup> SC35 q. 1446, p. 103.

<sup>151</sup> SC35 q. 1452, p. 103.

<sup>152</sup> SC35 q. 1454-5, p. 103.

opportunity to go to the "...palaces and gardens of the king, where they have beautiful works before their eyes, in architecture, sculpture and painting".<sup>153</sup> As a result of this comment, the questioner asks Cockerell whether he would therefore agree that public galleries should be opened up free of charge, and this the witness answers in the affirmative. He also goes on to note that this is particularly important in manufacturing towns, where there should be access to parks, galleries, museums and botanical gardens, and also the homes of noble families. Cockerell notes that the benefits of this type of access can be seen in the opening of a gallery of casts in Birmingham, that were owned by Sir Robert Lawley.

The questioner then asks whether Cockerell knows of any artist that has devoted himself specifically to manufactures.

**2 September 1835, Charles Toplis Esq. qq. 1553-1585, pp. 113-118**

Toplis is further examined with what appears to be more prepared questions, as Waagen had presented. This is indicated by the open questions, the length of the answers and their more formal language.

The witness is asked about the suitability of Mechanics' Institutes as a site for the development of art education. Toplis claims that the "...spontaneous origin, the progressive extension and steady self-maintenance" are evidence of the appropriateness of the institutions to reflect and answer the needs of the working populous for education.<sup>154</sup> This he opposes to the "...sterile schemes of tuition, calculated merely to rear men for the cloister" where the mechanic did not possess the "...leisure and resources... to waste the whole term of education on the profitless acquisition of the Greek and Latin languages".<sup>155</sup> The witness goes on to note that the institutes are already successful in their financial management

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<sup>153</sup> SC35 q. 1456, pp. 103-104.

<sup>154</sup> SC35 q.1553, p. 113.

<sup>155</sup> *ibid.*



and through instalments provide good, useful education at a price that can be afforded by the artisan classes. He explores the financial arrangements and curriculum in the Mechanics' Institutes in more detail in the second question. When asked, Toplis replies that he does think students should pay for their education as it makes them value it more, however, he does not recommend that these should be high prices that would therefore exclude those requiring an education. He notes that the present system active in most Mechanics' Institutes is successful.

The witness goes on to consider what type of provision this financial support goes towards and he explains that the most expensive aspect is usually the renting and adaptation of the building (particularly if a lecture theatre is required). He continues by noting the form of education in most Mechanics' Institutes, and lists these as lectures, classes of mutual and professional instruction, reading rooms and circulation libraries. He comments that the most desirable system of specialised lectures by renowned experts in science and literature is only available to large institutions, while other Institutes are only served by touring lecture programmes. In the larger institutions, each subject area also has a salaried master in charge of the provision provided, and thus an artisan may more often come under the guidance of an expert. The mutual instruction classes then use the newly developing knowledge of an artisan to improve that of his fellows. This system and the subjects chosen have been developed mostly by those for whom the provision is intended and this he once again contrasts with traditional free education, noting that "[t]he training for the workshop and for the study are essentially distinct".<sup>156</sup> He explains that

[o]ur public free-schools recognize no difference and have been modelled on the monastic institutions, which had for their main end the qualification of men to converse of and with the dead. Our engineers, our smiths, our carpenters, our draughtsmen, find no assistance in the dead languages, they covet to know the principles of science which may guide

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<sup>156</sup> SC q. 1554, p. 114.

and correct their judgment, and to possess the elements of arts, which may shorten their labour, and give the stamp of mastership to their works.<sup>157</sup>

Interestingly, Toplis notes how already the Mechanics' Institutes can be seen to be the hotbeds of blossoming talent among the labouring classes. While the Institutes are also the instruments of social advancement for that group, and "...have stamped a national valued on the system".<sup>158</sup>

The witness was asked to produce information regarding the attendance and financing of Mechanics' Institutes that he did, and this is reprinted in Appendix 3 of the document. Regarding attendance, the witness supplies details regarding the sorts of classes and type of students attending. He notes that there are only a certain number of classes that could be attended before a student had to make room for another, and so if instruction in design was the purpose of a student's study, that student would only be able to attend five drawing classes. There were about 1, 100 members of the Mechanics' Institute in London at any given time (due to geographical reasons). Most of these were mechanics, but there were also a large number of law clerks, due to the close proximity of the law establishments.

The London Mechanics' Institute is not the only institution of its type in London. Toplis lists many<sup>159</sup> and notes particularly the unusual problems of the Mechanics' Institute in Spital-fields, where numbers were dropping despite being in a heavy manufacturing area. He considers this is due to low wages. However, the witness explains that although there has been an increase in the number of institutes, this is not due to them all emanating from the same source or model.

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<sup>157</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> Western Literary and Philosophical Institution in Leicester Square, Mary-le-bone Literary and Scientific Institution, Mechanics' Hall of Science, Finsbury, Mechanics' Institution, Spital-fields, the City of London Literary and Scientific Institution, and institutions in Islington, Stepney, Stratford (perhaps), Borough, Wandsworth and Deptford (q. 1560, p. 115).



Depending on the subject, the institutions will be organised in different ways, although all of them provide drawing instruction.

The witness is then asked whether he considers that it is important that artisans and manufacturers should have a knowledge of design. His response is obviously carefully prepared and extremely eloquent, and therefore I shall quote it here:

[w]hilst a knowledge of the principles of mechanical science is indispensably necessary to the successful execution of all works of construction, and consequently to the engineer, the builder, the carpenter and the mechanist, it is an essential part of his education to acquire it; chemical science is not less imperatively called for by equally extensive classes of operative men in innumerable departments of manufacturing industry; but to a very large proportion of the individuals engaged in both branches, some practical skill in the arts of design is either absolutely needful, or would be eminently useful. All works of construction require to be preceded by a design on paper, or a proportional delineation, which is often to be done by the workman himself. Workmen in these branches must therefore be necessarily trained to the accurate use of drawing instruments, and their operations are frequently much assisted when they can express their designs by sketches made by the unguided hand. Those workmen whose province it is to shape and give form to materials, are greatly aided in their operations when they can delineate the contours of the forms they wish to impart, or can model them in a yielding matter; and their taste is necessarily improved in studying the selected forms set before them for imitation during the course of their instruction in drawing or modelling, from which improvement their works must derive additional grace and effect. Many important branches of manufacture call for careful cultivation of the eye, for the purpose of some portion of a painter's education. Other branches subservient to the luxuries, and what may indeed be regarded as the imperative wants of a highly civilized society, demand superior skill in the delineation of landscape, and even in the drawing and modelling of the human form, and of other complex figures.<sup>160</sup>

The witness then goes on to discuss the importance of schools for elementary science, academies for the arts of design, and museums that would hold models of constructions and designs and form. Toplis concludes that only these mechanisms can create the greatness of the British nation.

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<sup>160</sup> SC q. 1566, pp. 115-6.

Toplis ends his statement with suggesting that an education system (including museums) in relation to elementary science, design, construction and workmanship is essential to the advancement of National interests.

Regarding copyright, the witness explains that he has conferred with many manufacturers about it and that they have demanded a need for better protection of “their original designs”.<sup>161</sup> He notes that the present system, where protection is granted is costly and complicated. Instead, there should be a central registry, administered by those with practical knowledge of manufactures, and with registration for short periods of time, due to changes in fashion. The deposit of a design would be dated and kept in the office. Although the registry would be central there should be local tribunals, as in France, through which to pursue those charged with plagiarism. This tribunal would have the power to imprison and fine those prosecuted. However, Toplis notes that the key issue would be “...defining clearly what is an original design”. He continues

...you can so easily, by the alteration of subordinate parts, retain the character, and still it cannot be said to be a copy of that particular work. This would require a good deal of consideration by men conversant with manufactures and with art, to be able to produce a ready recognition of the original design with each individual might be able to claim...”<sup>162</sup>

The questioning considers a central registry and suggests that it may be inconvenient for all designs to be sent to London, due to weight. But Toplis assures the Committee that “...it seldom happens that matters of taste are very weighty”.<sup>163</sup> The witness also considers that Excise laws, particularly in the glass-making industry are an impediment to experimentation and therefore to advancement.

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<sup>161</sup> SC q. 1567, p. 116.

<sup>162</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> SC q. 1575, p. 118.



The questioning closes with a discussion about what role the government should play in supporting the establishment of design instruction. Toplis suggests that in the provision of buildings for the institutions, the Government would be invaluable. Although this would not extend to teaching staff and curriculum as the student fees would fund the provision. However, as for museums, the witness sees more of an active role for the Government in establishing collections of good quality. This initial financial outlay would be paid back in full by the improvement of manufactures.

**2 September 1835 Mr. Joseph Clinton Robertson qq. 1586-1666, pp. 119-126**

Mr. Joseph Clinton Robertson has been the editor of the *Mechanics' Magazine* for the last eleven years, a publication that he considers has been instrumental in extending a knowledge of many subjects to the labouring classes. He is therefore in an excellent position to consider whether there is a deficiency in a knowledge of drawing among artizans. To this question Robertson answers carefully. Mechanics, he suggests, are very aware of drawing and use drawing in their day-to-day work. They are "...able to comprehend perfectly any geometrical drawing...submitted to them".<sup>164</sup> In fact, he continues:

It is a common saying among them, that they can comprehend any form of construction better from a drawing than from the best written description. Indeed as most of them work from drawings and patterns, it is absolutely necessary that they should be able to do so. They can read drawings, if I may so speak, and understand them thoroughly, though they cannot themselves draw; just as many a man can read and understand our best authors, who if he were himself to take pen in hand could not write a single sentence grammatically... I do not think it is from want of opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of drawing, or from any neglect of those opportunities, that the majority of mechanics are thus ignorant of drawing, but because they have had no occasion to practise the art.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> SC q. 1589, p. 119.

<sup>165</sup> SC q. 1589, p. 119.

But they do not have the opportunity to practice their drawing. The reason being that the division of labour in the modern factory system means that each mechanic must concentrate on their own activity and so it is a waste of their time to cultivate a skill such as drawing, that they may never use. The witness suggests that the workers themselves feel this way, and he does not see any problem with labour divided in this way, which thus eliminates the need for all workers to have a knowledge of design.

Generally Robertson is satisfied with the instruction in design, and does not consider that British design, as a whole is inferior to that of France. In fact, the witness suggests that, despite rumours to the contrary, it is British designs that are copied by the French, particularly in the case of printed cotton manufacture. In terms of more 'fancy' goods however, Robertson is less sure and states that the aim of the English manufacturer, appears to be to produce quantity as opposed to quality. Since this does not seem to prevent sales, then in order to improve quality, it is public taste that needs to be addressed. But there is a conundrum here, the questioner points out because public taste is surely improved by seeing good design as opposed to bad. Robertson suggests that it is not as easy as simply "seeing" because "...the public eye requires to be educated in matters of taste, in the same way that the understanding requires to be enlightened by reading and study".<sup>166</sup> He continues:

...the more habituated the eye is to the contemplation of beautiful forms, the less relish it will have for the grotesque, the gorgeous and the glaring, in which rude and vulgar natures delight; and hence the superiority of the educated and travelled classes in all that regards matters of taste; the same pattern which, for elegance of drawing and delicacy of colouring, would be appreciated, and, because appreciated, universally sought after in the west end of the town, would, in all likelihood, be passed over unheeded, if not contemned, in Wapping, or any similar neighbourhood.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> SC q. 1602, p. 120.

<sup>167</sup> SC q. 1603, p. 120.



The witness does not see any incompatibility with the popularity of French design because he regards French design as attractive simply because it is vulgar and highly priced, in other words, because it is fashionable. This means that a Manchester design, sent to Lyons and resold back to Britain is taken to be indicative of good design, merely by its association with France. For several more questions the witness struggles to explain what appear to be inconsistencies in his testimony, regarding French design and British taste. Generally, Robertson concedes that French design, particularly in silk textiles and ormolu is superior to British artisan to be capable of that standard. However, ultimately Robertson suggests that the desire to have fancy goods is mainly derived from the higher classes, who are obviously not as numerous as the lower classes. Furthermore he considers that the present state of the market may mean that if design was too elegant, it may not sell at all. He notes how in West India and America, the more gaudy an item, the more are sold.

The questioning then turns to the classical elegance of design produced by Wedgwood. The witness admits that this beauty was its selling point and that it was a pattern most commonly used. The questioner then suggests that designs also based on classical forms, such as those from the excavations of Pompeii are always the most popular, but the witness notes that in fact the “Willow Pattern” is most generally used and that “...there is nothing very classical in that”.<sup>168</sup>

Again the questioning attempts to interrogate the witness’s ideas of artisanal taste, the result being that Robertson claims this class is ahead of other classes in terms of taste and that he reports that they often complain of the bad taste of their employers or customers, and call it “...working to the head” or fancy of those persons.<sup>169</sup>

In order to change this taste, Robertson recommends the large-scale circulation of good copies of the best existing works of art, in the form of good prints. He notes

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<sup>168</sup> SC q. 1622, p. 122.

however that if these are not of good quality, then they can be injurious to public taste as much as they have the potential to be instructive.

Importance place on the quality of the reproduction of images through engraving would appear to be an issue that Mr. Robertson has much experience in. When asked to discuss copyright and the need for it, the witness outlines a case in which he and several others including a Mr. Foulis were involved in 1824. It was the rediscovery of engraving in metallic-relief that Robertson claims was a favoured process by Albrecht Dürer, but had since been lost. The benefits of the process are that reproduction quality is very accurate and prints are not limited to the size of boxwood, but can be made to any scale. On two occasions the use of this technique has been thwarted because if at any given time the re-discoverers of the technique applied for a patent, this would demand outlining the process. However, once the process is recorded, the witness notes that it would be immediately copied, to the detriment of the patentee who would lose the ability to claim the rediscovery of the technique for financial gain.

Robertson is unable to suggest any way in which the problem could be resolved, except to say that a financial reward could be given to inventory immediately, to encourage the dissemination of their ideas. He notes that inventions have been brought forward to a learned body such as the Society of Arts and suggests that this system could be applied more generally. Thus, although the public should be the ultimate judges of the success of an invention, in order that there should be financial reward for the inventor, a board of some sort should be applied to first.

The witness considers that taste would be much improved if exhibitions and museums were accessible to the manufacturing classes. He also suggests that if Mechanics' Institutes were more directed and systematised that they too would be more effective. Robertson notes that at present "[w]hen a young man has

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<sup>169</sup> SC q. 1629, p. 122.



attended for two or three years, the circumstance of his having so attended suggests no definite idea of what he has learned during the time, or what course of study he has gone through".<sup>170</sup> The witness also considers that the course of study is not always suitable to the needs of the artisan.

When asked to consider Government intervention or assistance, the witness responds strongly, complaining that so far the Government have done nothing but restrict the cause of art through taxes on paper. Paper is thus too expensive for the lower classes to buy and cheaper quality papers do not convey copperplate engravings well, and are thus obstructive to education and the furtherance of knowledge. Robertson also recommends the removal of duties on the importation of foreign prints. In so doing, he concludes, the Government would effectively be assisting education.

Although Mr. Robertson favours funding from the inhabitants where an institution is to be set up, he still considers that it would not be too inappropriate if Government were to fund a third of the cost and help particularly with the provision of buildings and an allowance for professors. Again the questioning returns to discussion of Governmental impediments on learning at present. The witness suggests that:

...if books could be more generally and abundantly embellished than they are, if the embellishments could be as readily furnished on a large as on a small scale, and particularly if designers and artists could give fac-similies of their own design, that would raise the arts to a much higher standard than they have ever yet attained in this country.<sup>171</sup>

Again Robertson stresses the importance of an invention such as metallic-relief for the expressing of knowledge of art and design, noting:

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<sup>170</sup> SC q. 1651, p. 125.

<sup>171</sup> SC q. 1664, p. 126.

...impressions, too not from copies, as even the best of engravings are, but of the artist's own designs...An engraving, by a secondary artist, of a good painting, like an ordinary translation of a first-rate poem, is always sure to lack much of the beauty of the original.<sup>172</sup>

The importance of this knowledge transference is highlighted for the witness in the work of a man who has found a way to mechanically produce stone vases, and who requires copies of vases in the British Museum. For him, living in Scotland, drawings are the only access he can have to these objects and so, in order not to impede his progress or that of others like him, Robertson notes how drawings (or casts) can "...find their way...where museums cannot".<sup>173</sup>

**4 September 1835 William Wyon Esq. qq. 1667-1778, pp. 127-133**

William Wyon is chief engraver at the Royal Mint (where he resides), as well as an associate of the Royal Academy, but it is on his experience of working in Birmingham (twenty years previously) that he is first questioned. In Birmingham, despite extensive manufacturing industries, there is no provision for the teaching of design in the field of manufacture. Even though a Society of Arts was formed in the town, this was connected to the higher branches of art and not those applicable to industry.

Wyon notes that in his own field (silver-smithing, plated and brass work) there is almost a continuous copying of French designs, and any fashion in that country will be adhered to in Britain "...rather than originating design of their own".<sup>174</sup>

The witness claims that the designers are not original in Britain (and particularly in Birmingham) and that they are not trained in outline or proportion or in any specific area to do with manufactures. In contrast the French designers are instructed, and their handling of the human figure in their work is evidence of this greater training and skill. Wyon suggests that there will only be improvement in

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<sup>172</sup> SC q. 1664, p. 126.

<sup>173</sup> SC q. 1665, p. 126.



Britain if there is instruction in the study of nature and also in the work of goldsmiths from the fifteenth-century. But he does not know where this sort of provision could be had for poor artisans. Generally though the workers are not exposed to the "... 'truth' of art... the real correctness of it"<sup>175</sup> and "...have no certain principles to go upon".<sup>176</sup>

There is only one institution for instruction in Birmingham and that is the Society of Arts, although there are private schools and a drawing class at the Mechanics' Institute. There is an annual exhibition of modern works of art and every other year a display of old masters. This costs one shilling to enter. The Society of Arts' gallery<sup>177</sup> is not accessible to the public. However the witness believes that a small fee would encourage the artisans to value the experience more than a completely free exhibition. The questioner points out however that the removal of an 'impediment' (signing one's name upon admission) has created an increase in the number of visitors to the institution, and the witness agrees that it has.

Wyon explains that when the Society of Arts was being formed, he suggested there should be a connection with industry and that premiums should be provided for good designs of candelabras and epergnes? He also considered that a reading library with information about ornament would also be invaluable. He claims that this would serve an audience in Birmingham where there were a large amount of designers and modellers who, despite showing talent, were not sufficiently encouraged. There should be instruction, protection for designs and premiums in order to prevent artisans from "...wandering to other pursuits".<sup>178</sup>

Wyon's personal vision as regards silver and brass work would be the provision of a museum with casts from the fifteenth-century to the present, such as the

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<sup>174</sup> SC q. 1674, p. 127.

<sup>175</sup> This is the phrase of the questioner (SC q. 1682, p. 128).

<sup>176</sup> SC q. 1683, p. 128.

<sup>177</sup> New Street, Birmingham.

<sup>178</sup> SC q. 1703, p. 129.

work of Benvenuto Cellini and Flaxman. The museum would offer premiums, but as well as display, there would also be instruction in the particular field that the artisan was employed in – in this case silver and brass ornament. Thus a general education would be followed by a more specific one. This education would ideally begin at elementary level and would be available in large towns such as Sheffield, Manchester and Birmingham. There would also be museums in these locations, independent of the higher branches of art. Furthermore, because each school would be specific to a particular activity, the education would mirror the division of labour within production.

In relation to improving taste as a whole, however, Wyon considers that it is essential to create access to works of good art and design to the public as a whole. When questioned thus:

Do you not think, as reading and writing are made a portion of education, and as music is made a portion of elementary education, you might also educate the eye"? Wyon replies "It has often been a source of very great regret to me, that at our universities and at other public seminaries, the arts of design are not considered as essential part of education."<sup>179</sup>

Therefore the witness suggests that not only would an education in art from an elementary level increase chances of employment for the working classes, but it would also raise moral standards.

Wyon (who admits to standards in metal work remaining stationary, if not dropping) is then asked to outline examples of good work.<sup>180</sup> He lists the bronzes of ancient Greece, the gold and silver work of Cellini, German work from the fifteenth-century, the Elizabethan period in Britain, also that of work produced during the reign of James I and Charles I and II. He also notes the work of Thomas Simon during the reign of Charles I and the Commonwealth. But again he

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<sup>179</sup> SC q. 1721, p. 130.



regrets that lack of institutional support for such individuals in Britain, and he suggests that the Government should commission a series of medals for promoting good taste.<sup>181</sup> This would produce similar effects to that of the encouragement of medal manufacture by Napoleon in France.

The witness is questioned regarding the importance of coinage as a way to extend a knowledge of good design. Various points are discussed and particularly the possibility of reproducing or at least taking as a model the examples of Greek and Roman coinage. Wyon is then asked about the increase in taste for or-molu, but he claims not to be sufficiently knowledgeable of this area to comment.

When questioned regarding the use of artists in manufactures, Wyon lists Rundell and Bridge,<sup>182</sup> Flaxman and Bailey, Stothard and Howard, claiming that these artists are superior to those working on the continent. Flaxman's 'Shield of Achilles' being evidence of that opinion. However, he does note that artists of this calibre are expensive and do not work often in manufacture. The work of this type is therefore expensive to buy and thus there is little dissemination of the work amongst the poorer classes. Poorer artists, despite no lack of talent, are therefore unable to see beautiful specimens to improve their work.

Although the witness has not considered copyright extensively, he is also aware that the lack of systematic protection for designs is not encouraging to artists who attempt to create original designs. These problems are exacerbated by the present system, such as it is, being expensive to call on. In principal however, Wyon believes that it should not be too difficult to establish an inexpensive tribunal, made up of artists or persons knowledgeable about art and design. Again

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<sup>180</sup> This question was probably asked because of Wyon's lecture for the Society of Arts in 1834 where he described the examples of metalwork from the Classical period (Carlisle *A Memoir of the Life and Work of William Wyon* 1837, p. 66).

<sup>181</sup> See also the evidence of Mr. Charles Harriot Smith.

<sup>182</sup> Rundell, Bridge were established in 1806 and finished the business in 1843. In their period of business, they had obtained the appointment to the Crown, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York and all the princes and princesses of the Royal Family (Fox ) [*An Account of the firm Rundell, Bridge* 1957, p. 6).

the witness is not prepared to answer questions he has not previously considered, but he does suggest that protection should vary depending on the subject of the particular case, and should usually be extended up to five years.



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The minutes from 1836 reveal the name of the questioner and the members present, so these will be noted.

## **1836 Session**

**25 February 1836 Dr. Bowring qq. 1-65, pp. 1-10.**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Brotherton, Strutt, Lewis, Hope, Scholefield, Heathcote.**

Mr. Ewart begins the questioning by noting that the witness, a fellow MP Dr. Bowring, has extensive knowledge of the subject of design and manufactures. Bowring is one of the Commercial Commissioners of the British Government. He has studied the manufacture of most of Europe, but considers as regards the inquiry, the work of the French textile industry most interesting.

Bowring notes the French textiles are far superior to that of the British. French textiles, despite being made from more expensive raw materials and less efficient materials altogether, are sold in greater quantities due to the beauty of the designs. The witness claims that this judgement of French superiority is not just based on prejudice and fashion, but on the evidence of other markets in Europe too. He considers that English textile manufacture has improved but only through a knock-on effect of exposure to superior French design, just as the great masters have generally influenced the schools of art.

The witness attributes this superiority of French design to a number of things including the French national character (a love of change), to their outdoor life, general taste in clothing, furniture and architecture, to the accessibility of their museums and art galleries to the labouring classes, and more particularly their Schools of Art "...which are now not only widely spread, but their field of action



and of study is enlarged from day to day...”.<sup>1</sup> Of the eighty recognised schools, the School of Art at Lyons is the most impressive.

Generally the Schools are based on “...a conviction that...”.<sup>2</sup> Where previously, not every school was managing to recruit from the working classes, now this provision is much more widely accessed. The Lyons School for example attracting two hundred students, with full classes. Bowring outlines the instruction available at the Lyons School of Art that was originally established by Bonaparte to give elementary instruction in art and to improve silk manufacture. Now the school has six departments: I. Painting is split into three sections, a. drawing from a life model, b. drawing from casts or still life and c. a class in the principles of painting (similar to those outlined by Waagen in his evidence, suggests the witness). II. The second department is architecture, which is divided into a. composition and b. ornament (the latter was an unpopular course, but now is well attended). III. The third is ornament and *mise en carte*. IV. The fourth is a botanical department, which is divided into oil painting and watercolours. V. The fifth is a sculpture department divided into ordinary and ornamental sculpture. VI. The sixth department is engraving which was introduced within the last year or two. The school also has a botanical garden, anatomy provision, a library, a cabinet of natural history and a display of student work of those that have been awarded prizes, as well as a large museum, which will be opened to the public (free entry) when it is completed. In order to emphasise the benefits of this provision, Bowring presents an example of silk fabric done on a Jacquard loom by a professor in Lyons and notes how, after a change in opinion, Jacquard and his looms were whole-heartedly accepted in Lyons. The town now possess around 10, 000 of the machines.

Bowring notes that the machinery of the Jacquard loom has been attributed as the reasons for the success of French design and he reads out a section of a French

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<sup>1</sup> SC36 q. 8, p. 2.

report declaring this and also noting that "...peace has indeed called the attention of other countries towards our situation. England, Russia and Switzerland are our followers...".<sup>3</sup> He notes that this feeling is not restricted to Lyons, but at the Royal School of Design in Paris, there are growing numbers of students (some only nine years old and enrolled in morning classes) that are funded by the state and municipal funds.

This leads the questioning on to funding and the witness explains that, given France's political organisation, it would be virtually impossible for there not to be Government intervention and influence. He also notes that as well as state and municipal funding, each student pays 5 francs a year for the first year and then 10 francs for the second and third. Bowring portrays a sense of the extensive interest of the French people in extending their national manufactures, noting a recent instance of a legacy from a man living in the East Indies who left a large amount of money for a new institution in Lyons to be built for the promotion of the arts and sciences. In a similar declaration of national and municipal identity, he also notes how French citizenship must be proven to enter the School of Lyons, and preference is given to those of the town itself.

Furthermore, it is not just schools of art but museums with collections of the best specimens of antiquity and work from the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries that produce the taste for art that is visible in the French.

Ewart questions the relationship between these large historic collections and those of modern painters whose work is exhibited in exhibitions that are not free. For the witness, these displays appear valueless and disconnected to the true principles of art. Similarly for Bowring, the provincial exhibitions that travel around Britain are equally unsuccessful and may in fact be disadvantageous to the viewing public, by lowering their taste. Ewart concludes then that these

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<sup>2</sup> SC36 q. 11, p. 2.



exhibitions are both dangerous to taste by "...encouraging mannerism and bad taste",<sup>4</sup> and exclusive due to a payment to enter. Therefore exhibitions of this sort do not recommend themselves to the improvement of public taste. This he contrasts to the French model of museum accessibility and to this Bowring agrees. The witness pronounces that museums must be established in Britain that collect every beautiful object and then are open to the public to enter without charge.

Ewart asks the witness about the effect of the French triennial Exposition on the advancement of design in France. For Bowring this event was not successful because, despite beautiful designs being exhibited, the work was not economically viable and was merely for display.

The School of Art in Geneva is discussed next. This is an institution that the witness has recently visited and he outlines the programme of teaching, which is based on the manufacture of metals for watch making and jewellery. Students begin at the age of fourteen (after examination) and start the first year of their three year course being taught arithmetic, the drawing of machines and the use of mathematical instruments, such as a compass. In the second year, they are introduced to algebra, plane geometry, the manufacture of machinery and the elements of physical and mechanical science. While in their third year they learn trigonometry, statistics, solid and spherical geometry, the manufacture of complicated machinery, inorganic and organic chemistry, hydrostatics and hydrodynamics. The students pay 5 francs for the first year and 10 each for the second and third years. The work produced is of the finest quality and exported all over the world, while the labour force is well paid and well educated.

Ewart then questions Bowring regarding his experience of copyright in France and here the witness notes how seriously the problem is considered in that country.

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<sup>3</sup> SC36 q. 21, p. 4.

In France there is no distinct term for copyright but there is a word for someone who has copied someone else's work, this is a *contrefacteur* (forger). The French Penal code has specific guidelines for fining those copying designs, as well as those selling copies. There is also authority to confiscate machinery, plates and moulds. Previously ordinary tribunals dealt with the application of copyright laws but as with England at present it was found that these were inefficient. Special local tribunals called *Conseil de Prud'hommes* were set up and these consist of manufacturers and workmen, who make every decision regarding manufacture. Bowring lists the trades covered by these special tribunals.

The *Conseil de Prud'hommes* stores three types of manufacturing property: patents, "marks" (e.g. an identifying mark on cutlery) and patterns (placed in a sealed envelope and recorded as stored by the tribunal). The tribunal can be applied to for the appeal in any of these cases, although its decision does not take legal effect until the particular category of item to be copyrighted has been inserted in the *Bulletin des Lois*. As well as a fine, the laws on patents also require that the *contrefaitueur* pays a quarter more to the poor of the district. Patents of as much as 5 or 10 years are dealt with by the tribunal, while lengths of pattern copyright are specified by the manufacturer at the time of deposit. Once this period is over, the pattern is delivered to the Conservatory of Arts in Lyons where the pattern forms part of the collection. However, further payment to the commune can be made by the manufacturer to preserve the copyright of the pattern. The success of the tribunal is attested to by the figures of 3, 835 cases decided by the Lyons *Conseil de Prud'hommes*, 3, 680 of which were successfully resolved, with only 152 appeals being made against the judgement.

Various more specific questions are then asked of the witness regarding the French system. To these he notes that numbers vary on the tribunals and they can be made up of as few as nine people and as many as twenty-five. If there are

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<sup>4</sup> SC36 q. 39, p. 6.



difficulties then experts are called in to aid the tribunals' decision. The composition of the tribunals also depends on the trades of the area and both the manufacturers and workmen that make up the tribunal are elected by their peers. The tribunals are centrally organised by Government. The cost of registering patterns is 3 francs and the fee for taking action against a *contrefaiteur* is 1 franc and 25 cents, which, Bowring explains to Mr. Heathcote, is paid by those losing the case. On a final note, Mr. Ewart suggests that the local tribunals would not prevent the registration of the same pattern by different manufacturers in different areas of the country, and Bowring concedes that this may be a problem. However, the witness suggests that production is often particular to specific areas in France and therefore it would be a very rare occurrence. Also the *Conseil de Prud'hommes* in any location may appeal to the Superior Court to remedy the case.

**1 March 1836 Mr. Thomas Jones Howell qq. 66-143, pp. 10-16**

**Members present: Ewart (chairman), Brotherton, Pusey, Strutt, Bowring, Hutt**

Mr. Howell is an inspector who is administering the Factory Regulation Act. He covers a large area including Worcester, Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Kidderminster. After the last Committee session, the witness went expressly to inspect factories in his area to get information that would be useful for the inquiry, regarding arts and manufactures.

The witness spoke to both manufacturers and workmen and noted a desire in the factory operatives themselves for instruction, because at present there is little provision. The manufacturers themselves did not consider this need for instruction as important but generally speaking there was a perception that instruction would be valuable. In answer to a question from Dr. Bowring, Howell

noted that the workmen did not seem aware of foreign competition but spoke about themselves "...positively and not relatively".<sup>5</sup>

In Worcester there is some provision for drawing instruction, particularly in a society called 'The Literary and Scientific Institution' where members can take up drawing lessons. This society brought Mr. Constable, the royal academician to speak on the Fine Arts and, although some manufacturers were sceptical, the operatives themselves found the evening very profitable. When Howell spoke to the workmen in the porcelain works of Messrs. Chamberlain and Messrs. Flight and Barr, the workers told him that "...they had attended the lectures with great profit to themselves, as tending to correct their taste and to improve their judgment".<sup>6</sup> There is little other provision and workmen in the porcelain trade learn from their seniors, some may get instruction from the private drawing schools in Worcester. They were keen to get a collection of casts because the operatives themselves want to continue to learn from the ancient masters. This 'education' began when the private collection of a gentleman in the neighbourhood was opened up to the town.

In the china trade it was considered that good design was not to be achieved cheaply. In the first place, it was expensive to hire well-trained artists and secondly, hand painted work was liable to be broken. Thus, as opposed to print "...[i]f a plate is destroyed that has been painted elaborately with shells and feathers, and so on, you then destroy the whole thing".<sup>7</sup> However, as Ewart points out, if designing was cheaper in the first place, this risk would not be so great. Howell points out that to make designing would therefore be particularly important for Worcester which has abandoned printing virtually entirely.

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<sup>5</sup> SC36 q. 76, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> SC36 q. 77, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> SC36 q. 80, p. 11.



A series of questions are then posed relating to specific details Howell does not know whether the operatives have botanical instruction, however he did see them drawing directly from feathers and suspects that they do the same from flowers. He was not sure how many hours they worked, so could not answer Mr. Brotherton's question about whether, should provision be offered, they would be able to take up the opportunity. However, the witness did note that the operatives had time to go to the Literary Institution and Constable's lecture. Generally, manufacturing standards appear to be improving at Worcester, and Howell noted one very beautiful service being produced for the Pacha of Egypt.

Mr. Pusey notes that the questioning as related to the ornamentation of porcelain forms, but he asks whether there is any instruction or emphasis placed on the actual formation of the body and shapes of the services. Howell notes that there are only usually one or two workers in charge of this, and he does not know whether they have access to forms such as those from Pompeii.

Mr. Ewart asks the witness about Birmingham and whether he saw the same desire in the operatives to be more instructed in the arts and design. Howell comments that he did witness this desire, particularly among the modeller, dye-sinkers, and engravers who needed the education most pertinently. To explain why, he gives the example of the work of a modeller he met at one of the large lamps and chandelier manufactories:

The Committee are aware that the design having been selected or drawn, the business of the modeller is to make in wax the design which has been given to him on paper, altering it if necessary, so as to make it look well, and answer well in substance; for frequently a beautiful drawing will make a heavy and ill-proportioned article when presented in substance. Again, it frequently happens that the design cannot be formed in substance without alteration, from want of necessary support and solidity to the fabric, which would result from a close adherence to the drawing.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> SC36 q. 103, pp. 12-13.

This modeller had learned a lot from the Birmingham Society of Arts, but felt that there was a lot more that could be done. The Birmingham Society was founded by Sir Robert Lawley (the late Lord Wenlock), who had presented ancient sculpture in casts to the institution. But to draw from these, there must be a subscription of 1 guinea a year. One operative told Howell that "...if Government will provide a public and free institution, I will undertake you shall have 500 pupils next week".<sup>9</sup> Howell suggested that this is the only collection of its kind in Birmingham and that there was not a public collection. However, he did not see the collection because it had been stored to make room for an exhibition of modern pictures, at the time he visited. This exhibition was considered to be of no value at all, and the display charged 1 shilling for entry. Howell found that the Society of Arts did not attract workmen, and that these designers went more frequently to private drawing institutions in the town.

The witness did speak to one of the drawing masters who had the largest class and who had outlined provision specifically aimed at workers engaged in dye-sinking and engraving. He complained about the exclusivity of the Society of Arts and had written up a document to present their Committee in order to press for changes. The casts owned by the Society, which were not open to the public or any worker, were the only source of examples appropriate to the work of the manufacture in Birmingham, there were no other displays of statues, vases, candelabras, urns or coins.

Mr. Hutt asks about the Birmingham japanning firm of Jennings and Betteridge.<sup>10</sup> Mr. Howell states that they are anxious to have better provision applicable to their trade. They themselves have their own 'school' and also use the private tuition from drawing masters in town, they bring up the workers from the youngest age in that school. Thus it is in the manufactories themselves that any learning occurs.

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<sup>9</sup> SC36 q. 106, p. 13.



Mr. Ewart then asks about the origin of the fancy trade in Birmingham. Howell explains that it can be traced back to the introduction of French artists, which were brought to Birmingham by Mr. Bolton (of Soho)<sup>11</sup> when he set up his business there. No reputable designer was to be found in England. The masters and the workmen explained this to the witness and he notes that Mr. Flaxman and Mr. Wyon both came from that training at the school in Soho. Thus Birmingham is not able to sustain design of the highest order without external help and even now, when designs are required, Mr. Bridgen of London is applied to. So although there are professional designers in Birmingham, these are not of the highest order. As regards glass cutting, Howell notes that some original design has been produced "...from which all their new patterns are formed by, introducing slight variations".<sup>12</sup>

Thus Mr. Ewart moves the questioning on to Coventry, asking whether the same desire for instruction was apparent there also, as it had been in Worcester and Birmingham. Howell explained that instruction was desired by the workers even more strongly in Coventry and by the manufacturers themselves. The silk ribbon trade dominates Coventry and they are very aware of the importance of design, as well as construction. To encourage good design, two societies (the Mechanics' Institute and the Society for Promoting Religious Useful Knowledge) have been established, where drawing is taught to the operatives and where there is great stress laid on the process of Draft Drawing (*mise en carte*). They are considering obtaining a good instructor from Lyons, for 60 *l.* per annum. There is no exhibition from which the operatives can gain a knowledge of art. At present though, there are no French designers and design is copied from London where the patterns that are produced for the next season can be viewed. Thus, there is no original design and there is no designer at Coventry. They are very aware of

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<sup>10</sup> This firm is actually Jennens and Betteridge.

<sup>11</sup> This is Matthew Bolton.

<sup>12</sup> SC36 q. 125, p. 14.

the foreign competition and the superiority of French design in particular, and this has urged them to improve themselves. However, the trade is often at the mercy of fashion which does not necessarily encourage good design as for example, colours that are in fashion may not be the true colours of the flowers and leaves depicted on the ribbons.

Mr. Ewart moves the questioning on to the issue of copyright, which Howell claims has been a major issue for trades that are particularly reproducing large numbers and so use moulds and printing. Howell also mentions Kidderminster but notes that "...there was a great reluctance to give me information. I believe they resort entirely to London for their designs".<sup>13</sup> They have no instruction there at all and even the manufacturers are not very educated. At Wolverhampton they do japan work, but there was no school of art there either.

**3 March 1836 Mr. John Millward qq. 144-203, pp. 16-20**

**Members present: Ewart, Brotherton, Bowring, Scholefield, Strutt, Lewis, Hope, and Hutt.**

Mr. Millward is a lace manufacturer from Olney in Buckinghamshire, who also combines his production "...with occasional pattern drawing for improvements in my own business".<sup>14</sup> Millward was previously a pattern-drawer and had been taught by his father. He also learned his art by seeing French lace and "...had many specimens of beautiful French lace sent to me for instruction; and after some practice in imitation, I ventured on altering, varying and redrawing some of the patterns".<sup>15</sup> When the witness was first working there was a great demand for his handmade French-style lace as little French lace was being imported. Thus his product was greatly in demand. However, when the war ended, there was also a

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<sup>13</sup> SC36 q. 141, pp. 15-16.

<sup>14</sup> SC36 q. 145, p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> SC36 q. 147, p. 16.



new development in machine-produced lace in Nottingham, and both these incidents adversely affected his business. Particularly the Nottingham lace that copies his designs but sells them much more cheaply.

Dr. Bowring (who has been asking the questions) then addresses the issue of copyright in relation to lace manufacture. Mr. Millward explains that there is a great need for extensive laws protecting patterns, and these need to be cheap and quick to administer. He explains that in comparison with the patent laws covering the machinery used by the Nottingham lace makers, they have no protection because:

[a]ny variation in the structure of a machine is palpable and definite, and the effects on the article are correspondent; but our improvements are principally confined to elegance and originality of design, and in addition to the difficulty of defining a pattern, the cost alone of the remedy would make the law inapplicable.<sup>16</sup>

The structure of the working pattern of handmade lace manufacture is also problematic. This is because the workers produce lace in their homes, after meeting the manufacturer in an inn and being given new patterns and parchments to work on. This allows an opportunity for patterns to be sold to rivals, and it would be less likely to occur if the workers were contained in a factory “...immediately under the control of the master”.<sup>17</sup> They would always sell a manufacturer’s pattern (if they were inclined to do so) because they do not invent patterns themselves, in fact the witness did not think his workers “...capable of producing patterns... they are so completely ignorant of every thing like invention. I never knew them invent one in my life...”.<sup>18</sup> Generally, they are not well educated and can read but few can write.

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<sup>16</sup> SC36 q. 154, p. 17.

<sup>17</sup> SC36 q. 167, pp. 17-18.

<sup>18</sup> SC36 q. 161, p. 17.

There is no instance of a factory of lace workers and the business is made up of individuals who work for their own interest, such as the travelling people who sell pattern. Protection of patterns is extremely important because only about one in ten becomes truly popular, and therefore profitable to the manufacturer. Thus Mr. Millward describes a petition sent to Government and he himself has written to his local county paper (some five years ago) to try and gain some improvement as regards copyright for lace patterns. He suggested a central registry perhaps in Somerset House "...where every pattern should be drawn on a stamp; there should be a pattern worked in lace scaled on, to correspond with it".<sup>19</sup> Anyone caught producing that pattern would be fined, as would those selling the copied lace.

Millward has not given much thought to what type of tribunal or how a pattern would be judged as original, but he assumes that a committee of manufacturers and pattern drawers would be able to judge on originality. He does not agree with Dr. Bowring that fining the person selling the lace (even if they were unsuspecting) would be an impediment to trade.

When asked about French patterns, the witness considers that some French designs are extremely good, but others are equally as bad as some British lace (which he considers to be at the present "despicable – contemptible").<sup>20</sup> He shows the Committee a number of French blondes that he understands to be "...nearly as bad as can be".<sup>21</sup>

Generally, French lace is superior to the British and Millward attributes this to the protection of patterns that the French have in place. He does also believe that some training in drawing (particular botanical) would be useful, but that this must also be accompanied by learning to draw on ruled paper, in a similar way to the

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<sup>19</sup> SC36 q. 171, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> SC36 q. 182, p. 19.

<sup>21</sup> op cit.



*metteur en carte*. There are only two or three people engaged in pattern drawing, and they do very little of it. The witness believes there has been no improvement in public taste over recent years and this is evidenced by the inability of manufacturers to sell "...inferior drawings".<sup>22</sup>

Lace manufacture has remained virtually static over the last twenty years and there have been only a couple of manufactories established in that time: one at Kettering in the silk trade, the other in Bedford producing fancy straw. The manufacture in Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire (plus some of Huntingdonshire and Oxfordshire) is still as extensive as it was, employing in total around 150, 000 female workers.

For all these workers, there are only two or three designers. Dr. Bowring asks how Millward would define 'pattern' and the witness suggests he would explain it in the way most common to the lace trade:

It has nothing to do with the materials, the colour, the ground, nor with the filling up; but the outline of the principal flower is with us deemed the pattern. If there is a sprig or a leaf added or taken away, they always say it is the same pattern, only there is a leaf added to it, &c. – the same pattern in point that was in Mechlin; the same worked in silk that was in cotton. So that neither the ground, the material, nor the filling up has anything to do with it.<sup>23</sup>

Thus the tribunal or a series of tribunals (set up in Aylesbury, Buckingham, Newport Pagnel, Northampton and Bedford, he suggests) would engage a pattern drawer to undertake the judgment regarding the design.

When asked whether those in the lace trade would be in favour of instruction in design, the witness suggests that they would not be because many of the genuine lace makers left the business in disgust since the less skilled workers, people who know little about lace manufacture, have taken over the business for their own

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<sup>22</sup> SC q. 192, p. 19.

<sup>23</sup> SC q. 198, p. 20.

personal ends. They would therefore perhaps be less keen to lose their business by the introduction of security (i.e. copyright) or education. However such provision may attract "...persons who would do what they could to improve [lace manufacture]... instead of degrading it".<sup>24</sup>

As a final note Dr. Bowring reiterates the importance of good design for the improvement of trade:

But it is your opinion the trade would be improved if better patterns were invented, and if those better patterns could obtain the protection of the law? – Yes, that is my opinion; and at the same time it should be borne in mind, that the lace is worthless, and has no meaning, only as it has a figure of design, or a flower in it. A shawl or ribbon is of service in dress; but the whole value of the lace depends on the pattern, and that pattern is in the trade valueless, because, though purchased with money, it is not deemed property.<sup>25</sup>

### **3 March 1836 Mr. Henry Sass qq. 204-241, pp. 21-24**

Mr. Henry Sass of 6, Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury has had an art school for many years, which is devoted particularly to "...the higher departments of art". Mr. Ewart begins by asking what is the basis of the art of design to which the witness replied that it is the "...delineation of objects" through the principles of "...geometry, optics and perspective."<sup>26</sup> The chairman asks for more detail regarding perspective and Sass explains that perspective is:

...the art of seeing with your own eyes; the art of perspective supplies us with the infallible mode of ascertaining and representing the true appearance of objects, provided the points of sight and distance are judiciously chosen, according to the nature of the subject and scene. Its principles can never be too scrupulously observed; to deviate in any case is to violate the natural propriety, and sacrifice to a fallacious pretext of taste the certainty of truth and science.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> SC36 q. 202, p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> SC36 q. 203, p. 20.

<sup>26</sup> SC36 qq. 208-9, p. 21.

<sup>27</sup> SC36 q. 210, p. 21.



It is an essential skill for those involved in the ornamental trade because, as has been shown by the excavations at Pompeii, perspective provides the mechanism for creating “graceful pattern”.<sup>28</sup>

Generally, Sass believes that the principles of drawing have not been well taught and he gives an example of their importance for trade. He tells of how he communicated his needs for shelving to a foreman of Messrs. Layton in Coldbath-fields through perspectival drawing and the end result was exactly as Sass had required. He congratulated the businessman on having such a good foreman “...who so well understands drawing, which is a language of itself...”.<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately Sass was not aware of the training the foreman had had, but at his own school he has had upholsterers send “...their sons to me, to be educated in perspective, in order to give designs for furniture...”.<sup>30</sup>

To Dr. Bowring, Sass suggests that this teaching has improved the trade because:

...persons are becoming so enlightened, and feel the necessity of learning the art of design as a language of itself, by which you really can convey your ideas without speech, that it is getting very general to instruct them in the elements of drawing, as distinct from the common mode of teaching, by putting things before them, without giving them any theory to ac[t?] upon.<sup>31</sup>

Moving on to the china trade, Mr. Sass notes that a man named Baxter, who had trained at the Royal Academy produced some beautiful designs on china, in Worcester. However he did not sell them at a very high price and some were given French manufacturing marks to make them appeal to a fashion-conscious audience.

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<sup>28</sup> SC36 q. 211, p. 21.

<sup>29</sup> SC36 q. 214, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> SC36 q. 216, p. 21.

<sup>31</sup> SC36 q. 217, pp. 21-22.

Ultimately Sass believes that an education founded on the principles he has described is essential for artisan and artist alike, as "...the art of seeing with their own eyes... from the prince to the peasant all ought to have a knowledge".<sup>32</sup> He explains the processes in more detail:

...geometry teaches us form, and gives us certain geometrical figures, by which we are facilitated in the delineation and getting the proportion of things. Optics we refer to nature. Optics teach how objects or the points of objects transfer their rays through the pupil of the eye, and fix themselves on the retina, by which we learn a more simple mode of delineation than any thing that we can invent ourselves; we take our principle from nature; if we in delineation get the points and their distances and their bearings with each other, and then fill up with straight lines, we have the general form, and afterwards we can enter into the detail; but it is proportion that gives beauty.<sup>33</sup>

Mr. Ewart also suggest that education may come also from seeing beautiful examples of art to which Sass agrees, attributing the great successes of the French and Italian design to the free access to all their museums and galleries. Sass says that:

...every town should have its museum, but at the same time something systematic should be encouraged in teaching persons how to see with their own eyes, and then to have a collection of those archetypes of art which have passed through the appropriation of ages – the Greek statues as a foundation of pure and elegant taste.<sup>34</sup>

It is important that these museums should be free, as it would encourage the moral improvement of the people, as the Greeks show.<sup>35</sup>

Dr. Bowring also asks Sass whether as well as all the other principles, there should be teaching in what he term 'anatomical truth'.<sup>36</sup> Sass answers:

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<sup>32</sup> SC36 q. 224, p. 22.

<sup>33</sup> SC36 q. 226, p. 22.

<sup>34</sup> SC36 q. 230, p. 23.

<sup>35</sup> Sass quotes Ovid to demonstrate this: *Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,  
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.*

This he translates as: "These polish'd arts which humanize mankind,  
Softens the manners and refine the mind" (SC36 q. 232, p. 23).

<sup>36</sup> SC36 q. 233, p. 23.



Unquestionably; the end of the Almighty appears to be the perfect beauty of the human figure. You will find all the expression on the surface of the antique figures, and the mechanism of the body is entirely hid under a clothing of beauty; the beauty of the surface to be the ultimate aim, after all the usefulness of the Creator, in the formation of man.<sup>37</sup>

He goes on to explain how these lessons can be learnt from the sculpture of antiquity:

...we learn the anatomy of the human body perfectly from the surface of the Greek statues; and although the study of anatomy at the present time is necessarily from dissection and from the study of the skeleton, yet I have found, if persons become too skilful in anatomy before they know the beautiful surface of the figure, that they are apt to express that knowledge to the destruction of beauty, and therefore... they should study the anatomy on the surface, as they thereby become acquainted with the fine exterior of the form.

Mr. Hope questions Mr. Sass regarding this opinion. He asks “[d]oes not beauty arise, in the first instance, from the perfect adaptability of the parts for the purposes required?”, to which Sass responds in the affirmative.<sup>38</sup> The following is the exchange that follows:

May not a different species of beauty exist in different developments of anatomical proportions? – There is but one generic form of man, as we are well aware, and the antique gives us in a great measure that generic form.

Do you reckon the anatomical proportions of the Belvedere Apollo and Farnese Hercules the same? – Certainly not; there are different kinds of beauty and different characters, and that is where the Greeks are so eminent; if you refer to the Etruscan compositions, you will find in many the Apollo and Hercules are of the same form. But then the after thought was, if Hercules is such a man, let us make a form indicative of his strength; if Apollo was a god, let us elevate this so as to give the most beautiful form, power being in the mind.

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<sup>37</sup> SC36 q. 233, p. 23.

<sup>38</sup> SC36 q. 235, p. 23.

Does not that show with a perfect of knowledge of anatomy, that that knowledge was subservient to the expression that they were desirous of producing? – Undoubtedly.<sup>39</sup>

Mr. Ewart then asks why the witness places his emphasis so much on the “...elementary principles of the schools of Greece”. Sass replies:

...the schools of Greece recognized all one elemental principle; that acuteness and fidelity of eye and obedience of hand form precision; precision, proportion; proportion, beauty; that it is in the little more or less imperceptible to vulgar eyes which constitutes grace, and establishes the superiority of one artist over another, that the knowledge of the degrees of things or taste presupposes a perfect knowledge of the things themselves; that colour, grace and taste are ornaments, not substitutes of form, expression and character, and when they usurp that titled degenerate into splendid faults.<sup>40</sup>

The questioning continues:

Do you think that the perfection of the artist of antiquity depended on their being free from what you have called trammels and fetters of art? – Certainly they had nature all before them. We, in the modern times, are obliged to refer to dissection to become well acquainted with anatomy; they had the living figure naked always before them, therefore they could select from a number of forms, and produce that fine form that exists in their statues. The study of the human figure anatomically true, as well as in its perfect beauty, is exhibited in the antique forms the groundwork of excellence in taste, beauty, grace, with the little, more or less, which gives beauty to expression and grace to action, because expression may be vulgar and action may be rude.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, Mr. Sass is asked about the Elgin marbles. He considers that the building proposed to house them will not light them advantageously so as to show the beauty of the relief.

**8 March 1836 Mr. Robert T. Stothard qq. 242-289, pp. 24-27.**

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<sup>39</sup> SC36 qq. 236-238, p. 23.

<sup>40</sup> SC36 q. 239, pp. 23-4.

<sup>41</sup> SC36 q. 240, p. 24.



**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Pusey, Bowring, Strutt, Brotherton, Scholefield, and Heathcote.**

Mr. Robert Stothard is the son of the late Mr. Stothard (a celebrated artist<sup>42</sup>) and a draftsman and artist himself. He believes that there is a general lack of good art education but that it particularly affects the artisan. He gives an instance where his father was engaged in producing the shield of Wellington in a manufactory at Camberwell. But the parts of the sculpture were so badly constructed by the workmen, because of the lack of education, that Mr. Stothard the elder had to get the parts removed and additional silver soldered on. This was despite the men being well paid (which indicated they were the most talented chasers in the firm).

The witness suggests that artisans should be instructed in the principles of design from an early age and that museums and galleries should also be opened to them, free of any entry charge. This he suggests would occupy that "...idle hour of the mechanic, rather than allowing him to spend his time, as he does at the present time, in the pot-house".<sup>43</sup>

Then the witness lists a series of institutions connected with the arts that exist at the present time and the bias of each: The Royal Academy which instructs those who adopt art as a profession (also supporting the widows and families of deceased artists); the British Institution and the Society of British Artists, that sell modern artists' work (these do not instruct); The Society of Arts which awards premiums for inventions and is therefore less concerned with the present state of manufactures, as the future. There are no institutions that are simply for instructing the mechanic in art, not even in the Mechanics' Institutes. There are public exhibitions such as the at the Athenæum in Worcester which displays the work of modern painters, but this has no benefit to the mechanic.

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<sup>42</sup> Thomas Stothard (1755-1834)

<sup>43</sup> SC36 q. 248, p. 25.

In relation to public taste and the influence of superior foreign design, Stothard notes that Britain is far behind. He claims that British manufacturers such as a carpet manufacturer in Kidderminster claim that good design is too expensive and so stick to cheaper, but bad taste patterns. The example he gave of the Kidderminster manufacturer is typical, as he applies to a fancy draftsman in London to furnish him with a design.

Stothard claims that it is expensive to pay for good design because there are not many designers of high quality. There are a few exceptions such as Baxter, the Royal Academician, who entered the Worcester china trade and introduced classical design. Generally though bad design is encouraged because all classes, including the aristocracy are lacking in taste. In fact, it is often workmen who are more interested in improving their education, and therefore design, rather than manufacturers.

The witness identifies this basic flaw in the general education at art whether to the aristocracy or to the mechanics:

It appears to me that we are in error in the first instance; literature seems but to acquaint the mind with that which the eye has not seen, whereas the eye being open first, and the hand rendered of service long before the mind opening, I think the eye and the hand should be employed first. It is for that reason that I think art should be the basis of our education, instead of literature being the basis of art, and should be early instructed with mechanic power, or what the artist terms handling, so as to obey the dictates when mind shows itself. Wherever precocity of genius is encouraged, it prevents a child getting a thorough knowledge of the rudiments of art, which can alone enable it to improve with the progress of art.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, as Mr. Ewart sums up, Stothard "...object[s] to the present system of education, as exercising the mind prematurely, and not exercising sufficiently

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<sup>44</sup> SC36 q. 280, p. 27.



soon the instrument by which the mind is to act”.<sup>45</sup> “You would”, the Chairman concludes, “...develop the power of that which may be called the instruments, the eye and the hand, and you would leave the exercise of the imagination to the full maturity of mental powers”.<sup>46</sup> In addition, Stothard adds that he would not recommend the study of antique statues, and that “...which artists call *the round*” until correct drawing of outlines taken from a flat surface had been achieved.<sup>47</sup> Thus Stothard envisages an elementary level of art instruction that would then form the basis of a more advanced education that would include visiting public exhibitions with examples of beautiful works.

Stothard recommends an institution that would teach basic design and would be useful to mechanics to give them a tool to begin education of themselves and their families. In a final summary, the witness again reiterates these stages of learning:

In the first instance, drawing is taught upon erroneous principles, art being applied in an ideal instead of a useful form. For instance, landscape, which is ideal art, is taught before the mind is correctly imbued with the first principles of outline, light and shadow; and colour, which should be studied from individual objects before drawing, is carried into the more complicated branch of art.<sup>48</sup>

#### **8 March 1836 Mr. James Nasmyth qq. 290-330, pp. 28-31**

Mr. Nasmyth is a manufacturing engineer from Manchester with a particular interest in the application in “...the designing of the frame-work of machinery and likewise of buildings employed for manufacturing purposes”.<sup>49</sup> Nasmyth explains that far from good design being expensive, it is often the most graceful designs that are also the most economical, and he uses the example of how in architecture using iron beams and columns is cheaper but also more beautiful in

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<sup>45</sup> SC36 q. 281, p. 27.

<sup>46</sup> SC36 q. 282, p. 27.

<sup>47</sup> SC36 q. 283, p. 27.

<sup>48</sup> SC36 q. 289, p. 27.

<sup>49</sup> SC36 q. 292, p. 28.

design. Similarly, a machine the witness was designing for planing iron was made beautiful by the use of a parabolic curve in one section of the machine, which also reduced the costs by a third. Importantly, he notes that the areas where this sort of improvement can be gained are “[t]he frame work of the machinery”. He continues:

...[i]n every machine there are two distinct parts; the one consisting of the frame-work, which binds together the details of the machine; the other consisting of the details themselves. It is in regard to the frame-work that the improvement in the art of design would be most applicable, not only in giving elegance of form, but in attaining a very decided economy in the use of the material.<sup>50</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks whether Nasmyth’s knowledge of geometry was a prerequisite for this sort of work and Mr. Pusey suggests that, as such, this should be a knowledge required of every mechanic. The witness replied that:

I have always found, from my own experience, that mechanics engaged in these matters possess a very considerable portion of geometrical knowledge, without any tuition at all; it is a common-sense mathematics they pick up themselves, so that mechanics who have never studied it as a science are found quite fit to receive ideas of the most refined kind, because their daily occupation bears so closely on the most abstruse points; they are in a manner just brought up to that point that a little further information on the subject would give a very material impulse, both as regards the elegance of the design and the prosecution of science itself.<sup>51</sup>

Thus Nasmyth suggest that in order to bring out this natural faculty, an additional training in the arts, to combine with this practical mechanical knowledge is all that is necessary. As a method of attaining this, the witness proposes that as well as extending the influence of the Mechanics’ Institutes, he would also suggest the exhibition of examples of beautiful design, where there was an “...entire reconcilability of elegance of form with base utility” (from antique works to common domestic utensils and implements), in the work place

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<sup>50</sup> SC36 q. 295, p. 28.



itself, "...so as to make them become as familiar to the eyes of the mechanic as the walls of the building itself".<sup>52</sup> This is because even in the working day, there are many opportunities for beautiful design to be imbued by the worker. This is necessary because at present, the vision of the master mechanic (which is generally informed by good taste) is not being carried out by his workmen (who do not share his insight).

Mr. Pusey asks Nasmyth to describe why ancient utensils would be beneficial to be studied, to which the engineer replies that these objects exhibit "[t]he employment of the smallest number of lines in giving form to the object in view".

<sup>53</sup> In addition to this Mr. Ewart notes how, due to the basics of ancient art on geometrical proportion, these objects would appeal and be understood immediately by mechanics that were experienced in this way of constructing objects. Nasmyth comments:

In the majority of cases the most elegant forms of the Etruscan urns can be shown to be derived from the employment of the geometric figure called the ellipsis, placed in different directions, in which case it is shown that, by the study of one simple geometrical form, we are enabled to produce an infinity of elegant forms, and it is to impress such effects on the minds of mechanics that I would recommend the exhibition in a most familiar manner to their eyes, of those remains of antique design which combine in themselves the before-mentioned principles.<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, he sees the inclusion of these types of objects in the work place, as providing a common subject for the mechanics to converse on. He sees this in contrast to the present state of affairs where:

[t]he absence of such objects to engage their attention is one of the great causes why, after taking their meals at home, the men retire, to occupy the few leisure moments that remain before the working hour, to the public-house, in order to enjoy that companionable discourse with each

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<sup>51</sup> SC36 q. 303, pp. 28-9.

<sup>52</sup> SC36 q. 309, p. 29.

<sup>53</sup> SC36 q. 312, p. 30.

<sup>54</sup> SC36 q. 315, p. 30.

other... which is not only deeply injurious to their own morals, but also to the interest of their employers.<sup>55</sup>

When asked about other avenues by which this knowledge could be gleaned, the witness notes that in Manchester, it is only through the elegance of certain buildings that any visual education could be gained. Nasmyth suggests that it is important to make factories themselves (architecture which the mechanics see the most) elegant, so that these buildings too would become an education for the workers. Pusey suggests this would be expensive for the manufacturer, but the engineer claims that there are already examples in Manchester that show the elegance of form, but have cost no more than other buildings:

I may say forms are now introducing with respect to steam-engine chimnies in the town of Manchester, which, when contrasted with the forms previously employed for the same purpose, clearly exhibit the growing improvement in public taste with regard to these subjects; and from my own experience a latent taste exists, which only requires to be excited to make our manufacturing towns, instead of being a reproach to the taste of the country, at once the seat of the most elegant architectural designs and manufacturing industry.<sup>56</sup>

The best way of achieving this, according to Nasmyth, would be the exhibition of beautiful ancient and modern form, free and open outside usual working hours so that they could be accessible to workers and manufacturers alike. This would work upon the manufacturers who have the buildings constructed in the first place, as well as workers in the construction of machines and in the production of good using those machines:

...the ideas in one would in a very short time ramify into every other department; so that if we improved one class, we should find in a short time that the influence extended in every direction, and thus tend to raise the excellence of the style of the manufactures as well as improve the morals of the workmen.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *SC36* q. 323, p. 31.

<sup>57</sup> *SC36* q. 330, p. 31.



**10 March 1836 Thomas Leverton Donaldson Esq. qq. 331-370, pp. 31-35**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Brotherton, Bowring, Scholefield, Pusey, Hope and Lewis.**

Thomas Donaldson is the secretary for the Institute of British Architects, he is an architect himself, as well as corresponding member of the French Institute, and several foreign academies. As such, his expertise lies in the connection between the arts and manufactures as regards architecture. He notes that in Britain there is a "...deficiency... of able workmen, artificers and superintendents of clerks of the works".<sup>58</sup> Donaldson considers that these workers are deficient in both a scientific and artistic education, and he notes that this is problematic for the whole trade. This is because ordinary workers hold a crucial position in the work – they produce what others have designed, but they need the education to do so. As regards architecture, Donaldson suggests that drawing should form the basis of instruction:

...both drawing with the freedom of hand, and likewise artificial or scientific drawing. Drawing presupposes a collection of examples which should be very choice, and I do not consider it is necessary for them to be very numerous; such a collection induces a knowledge of good art, and affords the opportunity of drawing and modelling form them.<sup>59</sup>

Donaldson also suggests the immense importance of perspective that in many works of design, particularly that of the Chinese, is clearly deficient. Similarly, he also considers that geometry is essential for the education of workmen, as it is both "...a foundation of scientific knowledge",<sup>60</sup> as well as an artistic understanding "...for the greatest writers upon art have reduced form, even that of the human figure, to geometrical proportions".<sup>61</sup> Donaldson sees art and mechanical science as interconnected and notes that improvements in machinery

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<sup>58</sup> SC36 q. 333, p. 31.

<sup>59</sup> SC36 q. 335, p. 32.

<sup>60</sup> SC36 q. 336, p. 32.

are usually accompanied by advancements in the elegance of the form of a machine. Ewart asks what scientific education Donaldson would recommend for a workman, to which the witness replies, geometry, geology, botany and chemistry. He concludes "...if they were taught this [scientific and artistic knowledge] at an earlier period, they would be enabled to avail themselves of that knowledge, and bring it immediately into operation", instead of trial and error over many years.<sup>62</sup>

Donaldson suggests that there should be institutes in every county that specialise in the local area's production. He also considers it essential that there should be exhibitions of beautiful examples of ancient work of art. These could be both in collection but also published in books that would allow the more widespread exhibition of forms. The witness shows examples of German literature issued by the Ministry of Trade, Manufacture and Architecture in 1830, showing thirty-nine plates of external and internal architecture and decoration; forty-one plates of vases, pedestals and other objects of that type, and ten plates of room interiors. The government funded this and Donaldson believes that such an expense in Britain would soon be paid back by the advancement of design for manufactures.

The witness describes how the Institute of British Architects published a series of guideline questions to aid correspondents and travellers in making useful observations and notes as regards architecture. These have been distributed in Europe and the USA and there have already been returns from Scotland, Ireland and various parts of Europe.

When asked to compare the various parts of Europe in terms of architecture, Donaldson explains that England is advanced in construction, that Milan has a great school for teaching interior decoration, and so is good at that. France, he

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<sup>61</sup> SC36 q. 337, p. 32.



notes, is especially good at exterior decoration and the French are blessed by a population who have an extensive love of art. By contrast, ignorance seems to have a greater influence than the superior mind. So in England the style of Louis XIV was adopted simply because it was popular and against the judgment of artists. In contrast Percier and Fontaine designed every "...trinket, jewel or piece of furniture that was prepared for the court" in France.<sup>63</sup> In France a man with this expert knowledge, even in relation to manufacturers, is well respected and considered an artist.

Donaldson is also in favour of giving lectures on the history of art to mechanics so that they are aware of the different styles of art. However, he considers it important that they should hear different lecturers on subjects so as to "...make him think for himself".<sup>64</sup> He is also in favour of instruction that workmen should pay something for, and the awarding of prizes such as books and tools to encourage them.

When asked about engineering, Donaldson claims that the distinction between the architect and the engineer is a false one because to be an architect without being an engineer would be impossible. However, if an architect were "...a mere engineer, his works will be devoid of taste".<sup>65</sup>

The witness concludes his evidence by giving an example of the difference in cost between England and other countries. He notes that when commissioning engraved plates for his book *Examples of Door-ways, taken from Ancient and Modern*, French engravers of the highest quality still charged 2 guinea cheaper, per plate, compared to English engravers. This cost also included the extra transportation costs and duty to be paid on acquiring the engravings from France.

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<sup>62</sup> SC36 q. 344, p. 32.

<sup>63</sup> SC36 q. 362, p. 34.

<sup>64</sup> SC36 q. 365, p. 35.

<sup>65</sup> SC36 q. 367, p. 35.

Donaldson attributed this discrepancy to the diffusion of art more widely in France. He notes:

[a]ll... men will not arrive at excellence. There will be some of them who are inferior in their natural talent and genius, and they immediately adopt a subordinate class of art. Many who are bred as historical painters become engravers, but then they have all the best elements of art implanted in their mind by their good education.<sup>66</sup>

**10 March 1836 Mr. Noel St. Leon qq. 371-389, pp. 35-36**

Mr. St. Leon is a paper manufacturer, a draftsman and pattern-drawer. He says that there are about twelve people of his profession in London, but there is not work for them all.

He is reluctant to consider that taste can be advanced, because he believes that art, unlike science and manufacture, is not progressive. Rather he believes that taste can only be changed and he explains how his business is concerned with novelty:

I mean that in consequence of the perpetual craving of the public for novelty, manufacturers are under the necessity of issuing a six-monthly supply, by which means the invention of the artists is kept in a constant state of activity for the production of new forms, new combinations and new arrangements, which we call inventions.<sup>67</sup>

He notes that this means that when he began working, flowers were always used, now design are favoured if they are more classical and architectural. This does not mean that one is better than the other.

When asked about botany, he notes that “[a] painter who has to paint flowers must necessarily study them from nature; but botany as a science is useless to a

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<sup>66</sup> SC36 q. 370, p. 35.

<sup>67</sup> SC36 q. 382, p. 36.



painter. We look at form, colour and grouping”.<sup>68</sup> He considers that there are many opportunities to advance studies through exhibitions at the Royal Academy and British Museum, and the many works of art and books, but that perhaps this influence would be more considerable if exhibitions were free.

When asked what the difference between French and British design in paper printing was, he answers thus:

The French confine themselves to the imitation of objects with which the community at large is acquainted, such as landscapes, cameos, fringes, draperies, costume, hunts, battles, &c. Of those materials, their larger paper-hangings are composed. We rather deal in original subjects producing new inventions, fancies, combinations and arrangements.<sup>69</sup>

The witness shows the members examples of these papers.

**15 June 1836 Mr. D. R. Hay qq. 390-496, pp. 37-43**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Parker, Hope, Bowring, Hutt, and Brotherton.**

Mr. Hay is a house painter, decorator and gilder from Edinburgh. He complains of the lack of education for workers in his profession and notes that, although there is a school of arts, which is run by the Board of Trustees (for the encouragement of manufactures in Scotland), the emphasis is on high art. This has resulted in pupils (including his own workers) who have aspired to higher things than house decorating. Although the same institution also has a class for shawl pattern drawing, this is very limited. There is another school of arts that is a voluntary association and can be subscribed to, but there modelling and drawing classes are recent, so the affects of this instruction cannot be assessed. However, generally at present, house decoration is expensive because “...the master,

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<sup>68</sup> SC36 q. 378, p. 36.

although he could design it, would find difficulty in procuring hands to execute it”.<sup>70</sup>

The school of arts, inspired by the first Report of the Select Committee began classes in drawing and modelling, and these were added to chemistry instruction and other arts and science subjects. Only in the additional classes of the Board of Trustees is there any instruction remotely connected with manufactures, certainly there are no classes that teach design.

When asked if the manufacturers in Paisley and the other manufacturing towns look to Edinburgh to supply designs, the witness claims that they do not, and there is no school of design in Paisley. Instead manufacturers in Scotland tend to copy French designs. The style of Scottish carpets is therefore just the same as the French. There is nothing of a national style about their designs. There is no designing expertise, generally, and even a boy of seventeen has the role of designer in one large carpet manufactory in the west of Scotland. There is one manufacturer in Edinburgh, a Mr. Whytock, who has employed a trained portrait painter to design (after attracting him with a high salary) and this has been beneficial as he makes the best carpets in Scotland. There are also some improvements in Glasgow, where the Mechanics’ Institution is promising to establish a school of art and have awarded premiums to successful candidates.

Mr. Ewart asks Mr. Hay what he considers to be the best way to train “...persons intended for a profession like your own, or best adapted to improve the taste of the working class generally”.<sup>71</sup> The witness answers by suggesting the teaching of symmetrical figures. He goes into detail:

[s]quares, ovals and circles; vegetable kingdom, and they should begin their practice by studying from large, they should then practise

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<sup>69</sup> SC36 q. 389, p. 36.

<sup>70</sup> SC36 q. 402, p. 37.

<sup>71</sup> SC36 q. 429, p. 39.



undulations and volutes. Their attention should then be directed to the well developed leaves. All the common weeds that grow in such profusion by our hedge-rows and road-sides, as also in the wildest and most sterile [sic.] parts of the country, are worthy of the study and attention of those who wish to improve their taste in regard to what is really elegant or beautiful in form. I consider it a mistaken idea that ornamental designers will be produced by setting young men to copy statues or pieces of sculptured ornament, however good they may be.<sup>72</sup>

Mr. Hay recommends that, although free access to antique casts is desirable, it would be more useful if these were studied after initial training had developed some degree of proficiency:

...it is at this stage that the works of the ancients ought to be studied in order to derive benefit from their beautiful combinations, but not servilely copied; I consider servile copying of the works of others very injurious to the ornamental designers, as it regards originality of conception.<sup>73</sup>

Ultimately the witness considers that an attention to nature first, will create greater "...originality that they could not do by our copying the works of any other nation".<sup>74</sup> To sum this up Mr. Hope suggests "In fact you would seek your ideas from the same source from which the ancients sought them?" To which Mr. Hay replies "Yes, and thereby form a school peculiar to this country".<sup>75</sup> The witness himself has used the technique he subscribes to but, although inspired by the 1835 Report of the Committee, he published his ideas in his third edition of his Treatise on colouring, as that was only recent, he does not know how successful others have found the system.

Mr. Hay considers that if such instructions as he has laid out were distributed by Government, then any person with talent could be discovered. Entry into an institution could then be judged on how well instructions were followed. At present to enter the Board of Trustees School, drawings must be submitted.

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<sup>72</sup> SC36 q. 430, p. 39.

<sup>73</sup> SC36 q. 431, p. 39.

<sup>74</sup> SC36 q. 432, p. 39.

<sup>75</sup> SC36 q. 433, p. 39.

Dr. Bowring asks whether the witness is familiar with the practice of the children of French silk weavers who collect flowers and group them, in order to study art. Hay replies that it is only through Dr. Ure's book that he has discovered this and that that author has attributed the excellence in design to the study of nature.

The questioning moves on to the Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Edinburgh which the witness explains allows the purchase of good modern painting and sculpture (which may not be easily purchased for private collection, i.e. it is large). People contribute a guinea and the works of art are distributed amongst the subscribers by means of a lottery. An informal committee of eleven judges the standard of the work. He notes that there is a similar institution in London and an equivalent one, in the Dilettanti Society, in Glasgow.

Mr. Hay himself is a judge of carpet design (in particular) for the Board of Trustees (in order for that organisation to award prizes). He has found that there is:

...great room for improvement. They seem not, on almost any occasion, to apply the rules that ought to regulate the assembling of various colour together; their designs are generally defective in point of originality. Indeed, there is scarcely such a thing as originality in their designs; they are generally composed from designs of other countries.<sup>76</sup>

The witness attributes the lack of originality in design to no education and no copyright. He claims that manufacturers are always complaining of it and that he himself has been affected, even though he took out a patent in 1826. However he was not too badly affected because his work is hand painted and therefore if rival workmen are not as skilled, then the design cannot be profitably copied. This is

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<sup>76</sup> SC36 q. 457, pp. 40-41.



not the case with the more mechanically reproducible designs such as those that “...may be transferred to block printing or weaving”.<sup>77</sup>

Hay suggests that there should be local tribunals that are made up of designers and manufacturers, people who can judge the originality of design. He suggests that this registration should not be in a drawing but should be the article in its “...manufactured state, because were it a drawing no board of practical people could so easily detect the similarity between a drawing and a manufactured article as they could between two manufactured articles”.<sup>78</sup> The question was raised about the problem of the registration of the same pattern in different areas, and Hay conceded that a central registry may perhaps also be necessary, although this would only be appealed to if the local deposit was unable to distinguish the design or sort of the claim.

Dr. Bowring then asks about Hay’s own experience with artisans and the witness claims that really good workmen are almost impossible to get. He considers there to be a prejudice about his profession and he suggests its lowly status often prevents his apprentices from finishing their training and does not attract artists who cannot make a living painting landscapes, for example. However, he notes that if he does manage to keep his apprentices, towards the end of their training, they begin to understand the art of the profession and want to learn more about design. However, he suggests that this is only a fraction of his initial apprentices and if elementary artistic training was available, the initial dropout would not occur. His apprentices would also be more advanced in their understanding of design when they began his training programme. He does note that there have been public lectures at the School of Art that have helped, but that the education comes too late. Also the botanical lectures that do occur are not specifically connected to

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<sup>77</sup> SC36 q. 459, p. 41.

<sup>78</sup> SC36 q. 466, p. 41.

...drawing and colouring which is applicable to manufactures and the useful arts generally, and which is not likely to mislead young men by giving them a distaste for the humbler professions and inducing them to attempt to become artists.<sup>79</sup>

Hay notes that in Edinburgh there are far more aspiring fine artists, then there are designers for manufactures.

**17 June 1836 Mr. George T. Morant qq. 497-579, pp. 43-48**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Brotherton, Bowring, Wyse and Hope.**

Mr. Morant is a house decorator of the firm Morant and Son, New Bond Street. He has found that there is a considerable lack of good designs in his field, and also a shortage of able workmen who can "...enter into the proper feeling of giving effect to what was wished to be produced", by the master designer.<sup>80</sup> Generally there is a shortage of good modellers and the witness has had to apply to other countries to get experienced designers and craftspeople. He himself, advised by Sir Thomas Lawrence, travelled to Italy to gain access to the galleries and other art objects. He feels this has greatly improved his taste.

There are few designers in London and to get the design of a painted arabesque, that the witness shows the Committee, he went to an Italian designer. The actual object was produced by a worker in his own firm and trained by his father. The authenticity of such a pattern was considered council in the work of this particular room since it was to be as Italian as possible.

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<sup>79</sup> SC36 q. 487, p. 43.

<sup>80</sup> SC36 q. 499, p. 43.



Mr. Hope finds the production of such a work by an Englishman encouraging and the witness agrees that with a few examples such as this and the use of a German book that he has brought with him, he believes that much help could be given to house-decorators.

There are three titles he recommends<sup>81</sup> and he finds that they "...exhibit great knowledge of a proper disposition of forms that produce a good effect, and also of colours, which is very important...".<sup>82</sup> Including work from the antique taken from Pompeii and other parts of Italy 'on the spot'<sup>83</sup> while also exhibiting original designs. He notes that they were produced by William Zahn who was "...sent by the desire of the Austrian Government... for the purpose of improving... the interior decoration of rooms".<sup>84</sup> He has found no other books on interior decoration as good as this, although he concedes that there are good books on the Gothic style, although these are more Elizabethan or old-English style. His is also aware that the Prussian Government has issued books relating to manufactures and considers has issued books relating to manufactures and considers that if such was the case in Britain it would have a profound affect as British manufacture is a lot more advanced.

Generally the witness considers British textiles to be inferior to the production of other countries, particularly in contrast to Mulhausen chintz. The best of the English patterns are generally copied from the French (Morant shows two examples). He notes that there is a demand for superior or classic taste, but that there are few workers who are capable of carrying it out. Instead because of this lack of skill what prevails is an imitation Louise Quatorze style "...that they can

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<sup>81</sup> *Ornamenten-Buch zum practischen Gebrauche für Architeckten Dekurations-und-stubenmaler* (Book of Ornaments for the practical use of Architects, Decoration and Room-Painters, Carpet Manufacturers, Silk, Wool and Damask Weavers &c.) (1836), *Ornamente aller classischen Kunstepoken nach den Originalen* (Ornaments of all Classical Epochs of Art after the Originals) (1831) and *Ornamente zum practischen Gebrauche für Stubenmaler, nebst erklärendem Text* (Ornaments in the Practical Use of Room Decorators, with an illustrative Text) (no date) (SC36 q. 511, pp. 44-5).

<sup>82</sup> SC36 q. 514, p. 45.

<sup>83</sup> SC36 q. 513, p. 45.

<sup>84</sup> SC36 q. 512, p. 45.

turn it and twist it about as they like, it is only copying and copying”.<sup>85</sup> Thus although there are good examples of genuine Louis Quatorze style, the most common is a “...captivating [sic.] style of art to the uneducated in art, from its requiring a great deal of gold and gilding, and which therefore generally produces a magnificent effect, though sometimes the forms may be very disagreeable”.<sup>86</sup> Thus public taste is often corrupted away from more superior classical design.

Much of the ignorance of what is good and tasteful design comes from the lack of access to exhibitions in Britain. As other nations these should be free:

I feel convinced that it is partly owing to the public on the continent having the sort of access to the objects constantly, that tends to generate a better feeling and better taste and love for the arts than generally people have in our country. I find that among many workmen of intelligence there is a great desire to acquire a knowledge of art and of taste.<sup>87</sup>

There is also no school of decoration as there is in Paris. Thus the dissemination of styles such as the ‘Renaissance’ style in Paris has not even reached Britain yet. Mr. Wyse asks whether there is a confusion of styles and the witness answers that there is, although now his clients are beginning to consider how different styles of furniture, for example would clash. “[T]hey may make some observation tending to show a desire that all should harmonize”.<sup>88</sup> Mr. Brotherton suggests that a lack of knowledge of colour harmony also adds to bad taste to which the witness agrees, and so the questioner asks what Morant’s “...definition of good taste” is. The response to this question is that good taste is work produced “[b]y scientific principles I mean correct principles, that may be established as to proportion of symmetrical forms, or as to contrast of colours”.<sup>89</sup> Thus the witness concludes, prompted by Mr. Wyse that an education is the remedy to this. The witness suggests that the example he shows the Committee,

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<sup>85</sup> SC36 q. 541, p. 46.

<sup>86</sup> SC36 q. 546, p. 47.

<sup>87</sup> SC36 q. 554, p. 47.

<sup>88</sup> SC36 q. 560, p. 47.

<sup>89</sup> SC36 q. 562, p. 47.



which is of a badly rendered ornament, could be remedied had the artist had access to "...a collection...of fine casts".<sup>90</sup> Emphasis should particularly be on casts from gems as Morant finds them very useful and he notes that many of "Raphael's designs will be found to be taken from the figures of antique gems".<sup>91</sup> Mr. Wyse thus suggests that exhibitions of these valuable examples would make "...the public eye...generally accustomed to them"<sup>92</sup> and suggests that it would increase the demand for that type of decoration. The witness agrees that this would be the case and that the work of Percier and Fontaine utilise these figure as a main motif.

To the question of whether the classical or Gothic style is most appropriate to the British "...habits and buildings". Morant suggest that the classical should be favoured because it is more "... applicable".<sup>93</sup>

When asked by Ewart if he has any more points, Morant reiterates the importance of the German books and also introduces two papers produced by English manufactures. There is a brief exchange concerning the affects of the duty on paper to which the witness eventually concedes that consumption and experimentation would be increased if it were removed. Generally, Morant is optimistic about carpet and interior paper design in Britain.

**17 June 1836 Mr. Edward Cowper qq. 580-599, pp. 49-51**

Mr. Cowper is one of the inventors of the Applegath and Cowper steam printing machine and has a factory in Manchester. However he is here to discuss his ideas about art and manufactures and he gives an instance in which a good idea can be introduced:

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<sup>90</sup> SC36 q. 563, p. 48.

<sup>91</sup> SC36 q. 567, p. 48.

<sup>92</sup> Questioner's phrase (SC36 q. 568, p. 48).

<sup>93</sup> SC36 qq. 569-571, p. 48.

Inspired by Etruscan vases in the British Museum, Cowper began experimenting with Brunswick black varnish on plain terracotta and found that he could mimic the design of these ancient vases. He took the idea to the terracotta shop of Lowesby terra cotta works on Adelaide-street, where plain pots are made from natural clay (taken from the estate of Sir Frederick Fouke). He introduced his idea to Mr. Purden and finds that the work sells more of the 'Etruscan ware' than they do the plain. But Cowper notes the main problem "...arises from the men; the difficulty is owing to the ignorance of the men. The men have been accustomed to make a straight line flower pot, and therefore they cannot think there is more taste in making it curved".<sup>94</sup> Cowper goes on to describe his use of Mr. Reinagle's lecture:

Mr. Reinagle called his lecture a lecture on the oval, but he merely adopted the term 'oval' to signify curved lines of an elliptical character, and he showed that if the outlines of the vase are made portions of an oval, it would be a graceful form; and it is really surprising to see how, with this principle, you may vary the forms of vases and yet produce graceful results. If once the workmen had the idea of the oval in his mind he would never make a bad vase.<sup>95</sup>

Dr. Bowring asks about the originality of the design, to which the witness answers:

[n]ot only the forms of many are new; all the figures might certainly be taken from the antique, but they may also be taken from the outlines of Canova, or any other modern sculptor; in fact the outlines of statuary of all kinds would be appropriate ornaments for *terra cotta* vases.<sup>96</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks whether they are similar to the production of Wedgwood but, although Cowper admits to a resemblance, he notes that Wedgwood used a completely different technique. He also highlights the fact that the manufacturer

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<sup>94</sup> SC36 q. 586, p. 49.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> SC36 q. 587, pp. 49-50.



aimed to keep his work exclusive and so made it out of the reach of most people. Cowper gives other examples of the way art has recently been introduced to manufacturers, but the clerk does not detail these. Then the witness moves to note ways in which "...the principles and illustrations of art might be diffused". He notes how the *Penny Magazine* has about 150 images of old master paintings and sculptures and that those reproductions, printed on drawing paper and bound would cost about 14 shillings:

Such works as this, and the "Saturday Magazine", "Chambers' Journal", and the "Magasin Pittoresque", and the "Magasin Universel of Paris", could not have existed without the printing machine. And every Saturday I have the satisfaction of reflecting that 360, 000 copies of these useful publications are issued to the public, diffusing science and taste and good feeling, without one sentence of an immoral tendency in the whole.<sup>97</sup>

Ultimately Cowper notes that without the printing machine, this diffusion of knowledge could not happen and agrees with the stress put on the quality of good reproductions by Mr. Ewart. Cowper point out that the example he gave of these illustrations in the *Penny Magazine* are of good quality, depicting many paintings such as Raphael, Rubens and the more recent wood engraving of Charles Knight, which depict the whole of the Elgin Marbles. Mr. Ewart asks "[a]nd is this means of diffusing a knowledge of the arts (not by bringing people to places of instruction in art, but by conveying instruction to the doors of the people) a new era in instruction in design?"<sup>98</sup> To this Cowper comments that

...it is clear that there are hundreds of thousands of persons who are now acquainted with what are the forms and figures and groupings [of the cartoons of Raphael]... that never would have known them by any lecture or description whatever, and who would never have an opportunity of seeing the originals.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> SC36 q. 590, p. 50.

<sup>98</sup> SC36 q. 596, p. 50.

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*

Mr. Cowper notes that as well as the introduction to art appealing to individuals, it also raises the nations feeling and taste for art generally. He also comments that the art of wood engraving has benefited from the business and now employs many more people. On a final note, Ewart asks: [t]his appears to be a very extraordinary proof of the immense importance of the outlay of capital and the application of manufacture to the benefit of the whole community, and that too in a matter of instruction?" "Exactly so" answers Cowper "*popular instruction* in the grand occupation of the printing machine".

**17 June 1836 Ramsey Richard Reinagle Esq. qq. 600-605, pp. 51-3**

Mr. Reinagle is a Royal Academician, living at no. 29, Albany Street, Regent's Park. He has lectured at all the institutions in London, particularly on the relation between geometry and the beautiful forms of the antique. He begins to explain that any straight line is not graceful, but any line where one begins to use angles begins to become more graceful. This is best explained in his own words, and the following is an example:

As a proof that all elegant forms are derived from curvilinear ones, I beg leave to show you that any mere line, whether it be perpendicular or inclined to either side, and crossed by right angles, present no form of beauty, as is demonstrated by these two figures (No. 1, 2). But on the right, when I cause those right angles to close upon each other, and put it into an oblique position instead of a perpendicular one, I begin to approach, by means of angles (No. 3) to something that is more graceful....

The first position of simple lines may be either perpendicular, as in the upper part of this diagram (No. 4), or they may be converted into horizontal lines by a change of position.

They present nothing in this form that enables the mind to generate any thing, excepting that it might possibly be a gridiron, or represent columns; and when horizontal, steps. But when they are gathered into a central point (No. 5), and radiate, they represent a great many objects, such as rays of the sun, also perspective inclinations of converging lines; they represent also those degrees and proportions of divisions of radiating lines



which the Greeks have so ably laid down as one of the rudiments on which taste is to be found by tangible forms; this is the first arrangement of the concatenation of simple lines into acute or obtuse angles, composed and compounded in this way (No. 5, 6); radiation is the first arrangement of lines which presents any thing like the appearance of an agreeable form.

When a perpendicular line receives half-circular curves, crossing at right angles (as No. 7), a quicker approach to agreeable forms takes place.

Let these lines incline right or left, like a heavy-eared stalk of barley or wheat, and we gain another step to beauty or grace by inclination, and beauty by combination of small curves upon one main stem or bearer (No. 8). The circle is the first form in geometry of a simple order, and by drawing consecutive circles within each other, and not taking the same radius, (No. 8, 9) but taking various ones, approximating either side the original large circle within which the others are contained, there is a quantity of spreading forms like a trumpet, which by closing or expanding, and a bisection of the whole presents a most useful diagram, thus (No. 9).

Mr. Reinagle goes on to illustrate how these basic geometrical shapes were used in the composition of the Elgin Marbles and other Greek forms of design, such as vases. Effectively, the witness seems to be presenting his theories about the oval that the previous witness describes.

**17 June 1836 Mr. Edward Cowper and Mr. Cheverton, qq. 606-634, pp. 54-6**

Mr. Cowper is recalled to reiterate the point that a diffusion of a knowledge of the arts not only aids existing manufacture but also encourages new ones. The witness agrees with this. Ewart establishes this by noting that Cheverton used the example of "...the production of those vases of *terra cotta*, gradually rising from the shape of a flower-pot to that of an antique vase".<sup>100</sup> The chairman then asks Cowper about ivory and the extent to which it is used in manufacture. The witness is not aware that is used in Britain anywhere other than in the making of the ivory busts by Mr. Cheverton (72 Pratt Street, Camden down). He considers that it is important for these ideas to be considered, but their survival remains

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<sup>100</sup> SC36 q. 607, p. 54.

reliant on a widespread knowledge of art and design among the population as a whole. There are enterprises where English marble from Derbyshire is being worked by a Mr. Tulloch at Esher Street, Horseferry road, and “[h]e, from observing the great use of marble in Italy and in other countries, contrived this machinery for the express purpose of introducing marble into more general use in the country”.<sup>101</sup> Still it is important to have widespread improvement of taste, to continue this development and this “...diffusion of knowledge and of taste...would induce new arts of manufacture and new machinery to produce them”.<sup>102</sup>

Mr. Cowper is asked to describe Mr. Cheverton’s machinery and he does thus:

[t]he precise process is a secret, but the *general* principle is this: a lever turning on a fulcrum at one end is furnished with a tracing point at the other end, and between the tracing point and fulcrum there is a drill in rapid motion; as the tracing point is carried over the model, the drill travels over and carves the ivory.<sup>103</sup>

He gives some history of this invention and then notes how in 1828, Mr. Cheverton produced a much improved machine to use on ivory. However, Cowper believes that this type of machinery is also being used for engraving dies and that Pistrucci is working on this principle. Dr. Bowring suggests this could be a process used to improve coinage and the witness agrees, noting that Mr. Cheverton’s machine can be used to mathematically reduce models, even to a one-sixteenth of the size of the original. He explains:

[t]he bust which I now show the Committee is a copy of Sir F. Chantrey’s model of Sir Robert Peel, which was to be executed for the King, at Windsor, and is in every respect a perfect copy of the original; indeed it cannot be otherwise, for the model is the tangible or mechanical

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<sup>101</sup> SC36 q. 614, p. 54.

<sup>102</sup> SC36 q. 615, p. 54.

<sup>103</sup> SC36 q. 618, p. 54.



guide to the instrument which carves the ivory. This is one-sixth of the original model.<sup>104</sup>

Mr. Cheverton is asked whether his machine could be used to cut marble and he notes that it could, but that it would need to be altered because of the hardness of the material, while the same would need to be done if the machines was to cut steel or bronze. Alabaster would be too fragile a material. The inventor has noticed an increase in demand but he does note that if there is no knowledge, then there can be no demand. Bowring asks whether because the process is mechanical, it could bring down the cost, to which Mr. Cheverton replies that “[t]he high price depends on the material; it is two guineas a bust, on an average; and secondly, on the time that it taken; and thirdly, on the talent, or tact, to say the last, that is necessary in conducting the mechanical operation”.<sup>105</sup> Thus Dr. Bowring asks whether the production of the busts demands “...some intellectual direction”, “[c]ertainly it does”, replies the witness, and Mr. Cowper interjects:

Mr. Cheverton has a little of the feeling common to artists against making art cheap. I take an opposite view of the case. I think the cheaper an art is and the more diffused the greater the demand will be, and if there were to be a demand for those busts I would undertake to manufacture and Mr. Cheverton himself should put the finishing stroke.<sup>106</sup>

Cowper also mentions a carving machine invented and patented by Mr. Gibbs (of Croggon & Co., Pedlar’s Acre) that carves scagliola and oak wood extremely well and can be used to do inlaid work, and the projecting letters on shop façades. Mr. Wyse asks more details of this, to which the witness explains that it can make Parquetrie floors cheaper than the hand could, and that the Gothic oak carving for the new Houses of Parliament could be easily done by it, with Mr. Tulloch’s machinery doing the external Gothic stone mouldings”...so that by this

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<sup>104</sup> SC36 q. 623, p. 55.

<sup>105</sup> SC36 q. 629, p. 55.

<sup>106</sup> SC36 q. 631, p. 55.

application of art to manufacture the splendid palace of the legislature might itself be increased in splendour”.<sup>107</sup>

**21 June 1836 George Rennie Esq. qq. 634\*<sup>108</sup>-725, pp. 56-56.**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Bowring, Brotherton, Pusey, Strutt, Wyse, Morrison and Hope.**

George Rennie is a sculptor who has studied in Rome and other parts of Italy, southern Europe and Greece. He is of the opinion that where there are institutions that are supporting the arts, they are actually detrimental to the quality of arts. He notes that: “...too much interference either on the part of Government, or too much legislation... on the part of artists, as generally happens in the case of a constituted academy, naturally tends to create mannerism in art”.<sup>109</sup> He also suggests that when looking at the history of art, all the eminent artists such as Michel Angelo, Raphael, Corregio, Titian and Leonardo da Vinci were “...free and unfettered by rules and regulations such as have been created in the academic institutions”.<sup>110</sup> He notes that this is also the opinion of the French artist Horace Vernet (Director of the Royal Academy at Rome) and also of Gustave Friedrich Waagen (as the 1835 Committee heard) who is the director in Berlin. Mr. Ewart thus sums up that Rennie considers “... the arts are best encouraged by a system of pen competition, without any interference”<sup>111</sup>, to which the witness agrees.

Mr. Ewart then asks the witness whether he has looked into the provision supplied by the Royal Academy, in the light of these issues and Rennie says that he has. In his opinion the crux of the problem with that particular institution is

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<sup>107</sup> SC36 q. 632, pp. 55-56.

<sup>108</sup> This number has been repeated from the last witness and is marked with an asterisk.

<sup>109</sup> SC36 q. 639, p. 56.

<sup>110</sup> SC36 q. 641, p. 56.

<sup>111</sup> SC36 q. 647, p. 57.



that "...the laws and regulations of the Royal Academy are suited to a private institution, but not such as a national institution ought to have; its defects exist in its internal management; they are self-elected".<sup>112</sup> The witness also noted that the Academy insisted that its members should not be members of any other institution. He notes that the authority of the institution comes entirely from its self-elected members of which there are 40 with 20 associates and 6 engraver associates (the 40 are the managers of the institution). There is evidence that, despite professing to offer free art education to students (funded by the annual exhibition), that this teaching is not fulfilling the laws or aims of the Royal Academy itself. Even the President of the Institution himself has considered the work of the students too poor,, and the lectures that are supposed to be given are often not actually supplied. For example, although the lectures on anatomy have been given uninterrupted (six each year). "[O]f the lectures by the professors of perspective, none have been delivered in this important branch since 1827 to the end of 1833, the date to which the return are made up...".<sup>113</sup> There has also been few delivered by the architectural professor because Sir John Soane was unable to read his lecture.

Mr. Ewart asks Rennie about the Royal Academy's annual exhibition which the witness explain is organised by three of the Royal Academy specially elected, but that "[t]he public are very little informed by the academy of their inferior regulations".<sup>114</sup> The major concern in relation to the exhibition is the rule that deems that any royal academician may retouch and revarnish his/her painting, or clean a sculpture, while no other exhibitor is able, meaning that the dust and dirt created as the exhibition is being erected, are still visible on the work of all but the royal academicians. This adds therefore to the benefit of the society members have, not only in being able to select the work that is sent in, but also in positioning their own work to their best advantage. Rennie notes that this is a

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<sup>112</sup> SC36 q. 649, p. 57.

<sup>113</sup> SC36 q. 665, p. 58.

<sup>114</sup> SC36 q. 672, p. 58.

rule that is singular to the Royal Academy and has not been copied by other institutions despite the other laws being adopted. As it is, the exhibition is over crowded and Rennie suggests that only two or three paintings from each artist, as opposed to eight, should be considered.

Artists from other countries have also remarked it on, as well as from Britain, that half of the exhibition is made up of portraits. For Rennie this is purely because portraits are the most profitable genre for an artist, but with Ewart and Bowring, Rennie agrees that the large amount of portraiture indicates "...the great want of the extension of a knowledge of arts among the people of this country".<sup>115</sup>

On the final point, Rennie also notes that the exhibition is mostly made up of exhibitors who are not Royal Academicians. Yet the funds and Governmental funds, given to the Royal Academy, are based on the schooling given to the public, which is decided only by the members of the society. He suggests that as other artists and public money predominantly generate the income, it is unfair that members of the Royal Academy are left to supervise the disposal of funds. Ultimately Rennie suggests that "...the Royal Academy should either have laws and regulations framed such as are suited to a public body, or they should be strictly private",<sup>116</sup> as it professes to be a very different organisation from that of the private exhibition held at the Suffolk Street Gallery, for example. The funds of the society also go towards a dinner and private view, held before the exhibition is opened, to which Royal Academicians may invite persons of the highest echelons in society.

Mr. Ewart notes that the Royal Academy has recently been offered rooms in the new National Gallery. Rennie considers that not only does this give the Royal Academy a monopoly over other institutions, such as the Society of British

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<sup>115</sup> SC36 q. 685, p. 60.



Artists (who petitioned Parliament against it), but also means that a National Gallery will house both free exhibitions of the old masters, as well as 1 shilling entry exhibitions of modern paintings, which is an “absurdity”.<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, on the authority of Messrs. Woodburn, Solly and others, they consider that once the national pictures, and the cartoons from Hampton Court, are brought to the National Gallery and hung, there will be little free space. It is important that there is some so that any individuals who own great paintings may be induced to give their works to the national collection, seeing that there would be adequate room and light to show them to their best advantage. Thus the Royal Academy would take up this valuable room.

Generally, Rennie considers that the size of the National Gallery is too small and will soon be limited if the Government collect and private individuals donate work. Compared to Munich or Paris, it is very limited. He also suggests that collections of English painting (which there are none of at present), should be made, and modern English paintings should also be brought. Mr. Ewart attempts to sum up the witnesses opinions:

...the result of your general observations is this, that if Government interpose at all in matters of art, they should interpose on the principle of free competition, by holding out to all societies and artists any prize Government should think proper to distribute, but not by interfering with the regulations of, or giving preference to, any society?<sup>118</sup>

The exclusiveness of an exhibiting system means a lack of diffusion of knowledge of art among the people. As evidence of this the witness describes how the apparently minor impediment to entry of having to sign one's name before entering the British Museum, when removed, almost trebled the amount of visitors (many of them of the lower classes) to the institution. He is in favour of

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<sup>116</sup> SC36 q. 689, p. 60.

<sup>117</sup> SC36 q. 700, p. 61.

<sup>118</sup> SC36 q. 710, p. 62.

free museums and libraries, just as those in Bavaria or Paris, where even the peasantry can leave their work and demand a book or see a great work of art.

The questioning ends with Ewart suggesting that the weather is partly to blame for the problem of exhibitions because they can't be outside. Rennie dismisses this and he is also reluctant to describe how he would reconstitute the Royal Academy. All he will say is that the exhibitors themselves, should have a say in the constitution and disposal of the funds of the society.

**21 June 1836 Frederick Hurlestone Esq. qq. 726-777, pp. 63-7**

Mr. Hurlestone is the President of the Society of British Artists in Suffolk Street and complains strongly about the low standard of the arts in Britain. He blames this almost entirely on the Royal Academy who he considers to have had through their "...monopoly of every honour and of the highest patronage; its privileges and advantages, together with its laws, destroying all competition".<sup>119</sup> Hurlestone believes that this has resulted from the fact that the Royal Academy was originally a private organisation and that the law where no member of the Royal Academy can be a member of any other society is the legacy of that. This means that funds given by the King for the general benefit of artists are actually restricted to those who are solely members of the Royal Academy: "...[t]he King has conferred on them the power of granting diplomas, and the president is a trustee *ex officio* of the British Museum, and the National Gallery. All honours are, in fact, placed in the hands of the Royal Academy".<sup>120</sup> This law has been strictly adhered to, while the law preventing artists from exhibiting at any other institution has not, because it would be in their interests.

Hurlestone also considers there to be a problem with the fact that the Royal Academy are the judges of the entry of paintings into the Royal Academy

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<sup>119</sup> SC36 q. 730, p. 63.



exhibition. But as Mr. Pusey points out, it is perhaps better to have those who are knowledgeable to decide on the merit of paintings, than those that are not. The witness then reiterates a point made by the previous witness, Mr. Rennie. In relation to the comments Rennie made about the use of funds by the Royal Academy, when the earning of those funds was mainly due to the exhibition of non-Royal Academy members, Hurlestone provides the following evidence:

...during three years, the proportion of the members of the academy and other exhibitors was, in 1833, 45 members of the Royal Academy (with associates) and 608 non-members. In 1832 there were 48 members exhibited and 638 non-members. In 1831 the exhibition consisted of the works of 45 members and 655 non-members.<sup>121</sup>

Mr. Hurlestone notes that of the work exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1833, 141 were "...historical and poetical works", whilst 531 were portraits.<sup>122</sup> Of the other problems, the witness considers the law preventing the retouching of works by artists other than the Royal Academy to be particularly damaging, and this is something that Hurlestone's own society does not follow. Generally he find grievances in the fact that for any artist to truly be successful, eventually they must join the Royal Academy, to the detriment of the other societies, such as the Society of British Artists, that have developed and supported them. Mr. Ewart asks the witness to explain why a petition was sent from his society to parliament about the Royal Academy gaining use of room in the new National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. Hurlestone explains that it would be a rival to the nearby Suffolk Street Gallery in Pall-Mall East. While the placing of the Royal Academy in a national institution would also symbolically suggest that Society was itself private, while actually, it was not.

Mr. Pusey suggests that if the constitution was changed regarding the laws the witness has complained about, that the problem might be reminded and

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<sup>120</sup> SC36 q. 732, p. 64.

<sup>121</sup> SC36 q. 743, p. 64.

<sup>122</sup> Phrase of the questioner SC36 q. 744, p. 65.

Hurlestone agrees that it would, but that this would ultimately mean the forming of a new institution.

Mr. Hope suggests that one of the key areas for change would be in the “...principle of self-election”.<sup>123</sup> The witness considers that the removal of this would be very useful and suggests Mr. Rennie’s suggestion (whereby exhibiting artists who had consistently exhibited for two or three years) would be able to be elected and decide on hanging and funding. But as Mr. Hope suggests, better there would be no society at all, then one that was corrupt.

Mr. Ewart asks whether the arts have flourished since the institution was established and Hurlestone considers that they have not, and that the Society has actually been responsible for their decline Mr. Pusey tries to suggest that the arts were already in decline in this country and that is why the Royal Academy was set up in the first place. But as Mr. Ewart concludes, to Mr. Hurlestone’s confirmation, the case must still be made that the Royal Academy has not prevented the decline.

Mr. Hope makes the point that inevitably institutions are not simply about advancing their members solely through merit, the witness agrees with this and suggests that some of the principles artists of the present, such as Edwin Landseer, Martin, Stanfield, Calcott and Turner use styles that could not be taught in any academy. Mr. Ewart proposes that no real genius could be fostered by the academy, including poetry, to which Hurlestone agrees, but then Mr. Pusey puts forward a query in this respect:

You do not extend that observation as to poetry to public schools and universities; you do not consider them prejudicial to a full development of poetical genius? – I do not think they contribute to it, except in giving the

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<sup>123</sup> SC36 q. 761, p. 66.



principles of that knowledge which a poet should possess, but which may be acquired without, as in the instance of Shakespeare, Pope or Gibbon.<sup>124</sup>

Mr. Ewart suggests in confirmation of the witness's response:

You suppose that if certain rules are laid down for the mere reading of authors, that would be no injurious restriction; but suppose you should attempt to make a poet by certain restrictive rules, like academics regulations, do you not think the attempt would fail in the same way as it does in sculpture and painting?<sup>125</sup>

Thus Mr. Hope concludes: “[i]t is not quite a distinct thing to give artists the means of supplying themselves with information, and to create a corporation for the purpose?”<sup>126</sup>

**24 June 1836 Frederick Hurlestone Esq. qq. 778-806, pp. 67-70**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Brotherton, Bowring, Pusey, Hope and Morrison.**

Mr. Ewart asks the witness if he has any further comments relating to the Royal Academy and Hurlestone outlines two major points, the first to do with the claim to teaching that attracts funds to the Royal Academy, the second to their charity fund. The witness suggests that he is not qualified enough to discuss the position of the schools and he defers to Mr. Rennie's evidence and that of future witness. However he feels able to discuss his second point, the charity fund. Again he stresses the issue that, despite the majority of artists being non-Royal Academy members who exhibit, the money raised from the exhibition is used by the Royal Academy and for their families. Other artists may apply on the recommendation of a member, but this is very restricted. Ultimately the main evil, as far as

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<sup>124</sup> SC36 q. 775, p. 67.

<sup>125</sup> SC36 q. 776, p. 67.

<sup>126</sup> SC36 q. 777, p. 67.

Hurlestone is concerned, is that the Royal Academy is a private society, masquerading as a public one. Their status also means that they have influence at other institutions such as the British Museum. He explains to Mr. Morrison that the main attraction at the Somerset House exhibition is not the Royal Academy paintings, but that of others, even though there are some good artists at the Royal Academy.

Mr. Morrison asks whether there is advantage for the Royal Academy by their being located in the Government premises of Somerset House. Hurlestone considers that it is more importantly the privileges bestowed on the Royal Academy, rather than the rooms that is the most damaging thing.

Mr. Hope asks about the other societies that provide their own rooms and the witness responds by discussing the Royal and Antiquarian Societies. He notes that though these societies have been given premises, they share one similarity with the Royal Academy, which is that they can bestow honours and that they are chartered. However the need to award honours is more important in science because the public has little knowledge of it, whereas with art, the public, particularly those of the higher classes are more able to understand its merit. If the Royal Academy were a completely private organisation, Hurlestone would not have the right to say these things, but because it is not, he considers that he has a right to comment on its constitution.

Mr. Hope then asks about what the confirmation of honours by the Royal Academy actually means. Hurlestone replies that it gives a certain dignity immediately to the artist, who, along with his eldest son becomes immediately 'esquire'. Membership entitles him or her to manage the institution, and to take precedence over all but a Doctor (of a University). This leads to better employment and the ability to charge higher prices for work. The president is a:



...trustee of national institutions, and acts as the official representative of the arts in all transactions with Government; his influence and theirs extend to the British Institution, where their monopoly of power is confirmed by articles 4 chap. 1 and 2 chap. VIII. Of the rules of that establishment; the president usually receives the distinction of knighthood; in fact it is the channel from which all the honours of the profession flow.<sup>127</sup>

The King signs the diploma and thus the artist who does not have this diploma is considered less of an artist. Mr. Ewart discusses the award of an M. A. in respect of the Royal Academy and the witness notes that the latter ranks above an M. A. Generally, Hurlestone concludes:

...it is not necessary to confer degrees at all in art; the public will determine who is the best artist, without the assistance of this body. But as to physicians in their present position, the public are not in the situation of determining who is the learned man or that is the quack; therefore it is necessary in that profession to have some security, but in art it is totally useless and highly injurious.<sup>128</sup>

#### **24 June 1836 John Martin Esq. qq. 807-920, pp. 70-79**

John Martin is a celebrated painter who for about eight years exhibited at the Royal Academy. In that time he found his work was badly treated. He therefore now does not exhibit there any more, favouring the British Institution instead. While at the Royal Academy, his work was placed in dark corners, high up or too low down and this worked against the perspectival composition of the picture, so that the image could not be understood. In the best places, at eye level and in good light were paintings by Royal Academicians. However, the merit of the artist's work could not have been to blame for this bad positioning, as one of Martin's paintings, 'Joshua', which was hung in a dark corner at the Royal Academy, was shown in good light and at eye level in the British Institution, and was awarded the principal premium of the year. Never has the painter been able

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<sup>127</sup> SC36 q. 799, p. 69.

<sup>128</sup> SC36 q. 806, p. 70.

to varnish his painting before the exhibition was open to the public, although all the Royal Academicians are able. At the British Institute all painters (including non-members) are able to retouch their work. On one occasion, varnish was even spilt on top of the dust on a painting of Martin's called 'Clytie' and it was not until the exhibition was opened that he was able to clean the work.<sup>129</sup>

Generally, in the bias shown to the work of the Royal Academy, there is a message being sent the public about what is good and bad art, as well as what are the higher and lower branches of art. Historical and poetical paintings are of the highest art order and yet it is portraits that are placed in positions of priority in contrast to the dark corners reserved for Martin's work. The artist comments: "[i]t is a shame that a portrait, which is already paid for before it is sent to the place, and a thing of little or no study, should occupy the place of an historical picture".<sup>130</sup> Furthermore he notes: "...for so long as portrait painting is patronized as 'the only true historie', so long must historic painting be dead as an art, for artist paint to live, and it is too much to expect any one to die a martyr for love of any peculiar branch".<sup>131</sup>

Dr. Bowring asks whether the exhibition at the Royal Academy has advanced the cause of art. The witness does not feel qualified to answer and believes that generally, it is simply that portrait painting (which is a lower form of art) is given more precedence over historical painting, that he has found fault with. Martin comments that "...you cannot stop the progress of civilization, and as that goes on, we are improving in art, and science and literature. Whatever the Royal Academy may do, they cannot stop the progress of art".<sup>132</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks Martin about the British Institution and the witness claims that it is not as good as it used to be and that he feels excluded from that institution

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<sup>129</sup> This was dated 1814 (Royal Academy 1951, p. 160).

<sup>130</sup> SC36 q. 830, p. 72.

<sup>131</sup> SC36 q. 837, p. 72.



too. He notes that there is some rumour of a connection between the Royal Academy and the British Institution (Mr. Seguier is in charge of hanging the paintings at the British Institution), and this seems to be borne out by the favour shown to some Royal Academy paintings, even though they are again portraits, which the British Institution purports not to accept. The British Institution however is only marginally better suited for exhibition than the Royal Academy, and suggests the witness, "...it is... in their [the Royal Academy's] interest to keep in as small a place as possible as they can excuse themselves for misplacing the pictures, by saying 'We have not room even for ourselves'".<sup>133</sup> Mr. Martin declares that he used to be ambitious to exhibit at the Royal Academy, but after his treatment there, he has no wish to do so again. He has instead exhibited abroad and has received favourable treatment and honours from five European sovereigns including the French and Belgium. However, the witness does think that the foreign artists are treated very well by the Royal Academy. Premiums are also awarded at the British Institution and he sold his 'Joshua Commanding the Sun to stand Still', 'Fall of Babylon' and 'Belshazzar's Feast' paintings at that institution.

Mr. Martin has also been forced to become an engraver as he has no other way of gaining reward for his work. However, he has suffered from the lack of copyright and both he and Mr. Turner have tried to do something to change the copyright laws. He has suffered at the hands of French copyists as well as British and although he has tried to prosecute, this has not been financially very successful because "[t]he laws of copyright and the patent laws are all nonsense; for no man feels himself protected in whatever invention or work he brings out".<sup>134</sup>

Mr. Ewart turns to the subject of the private view at the Academy, and the painter notes that no invitation is give to any other painter, besides the Royal

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<sup>132</sup> SC36 q. 839, p. 72.

<sup>133</sup> SC36 q. 847, p. 73.

<sup>134</sup> SC36 q. 867, p. 75.

Academicians, and no other painter exhibiting in the exhibition is able to invite any guest. Only patrons of art are generally invited (to the benefit of the Royal Academicians) and not figures who are generally "...distinguished in science, literature and art",<sup>135</sup> as one would expect of a national art institution. He himself is not invited to open galleries (such as that of the Duke of Sutherland or the Marquis of Westminster) and even when his work is being exhibited he is not invited to the private views of either the Institution or the Royal Academy.

Previously, Mr. Hope and Mr. Morrison asked a few brief questions regarding the status of associates in the Royal Academy, where an associate is not quite a Royal Academician and is like an apprentice to one, before he or she may be elected. Mr. Martin considered this to be a degrading position.

When asked by Mr. Hope whether he thinks that no institution at all would be more beneficial than a corrupt society, Martin answers that he would consider a society only valuable if it had a "...very good and open management".<sup>136</sup> He considers that the Royal Academy does not, but he speaks not of individuals (many of whom have been supportive friends of his such as Mr. Howard, Mr. Wilkie and Mr. Turner), he speaks rather of the system itself. Generally Martin believes that there should be free competition based on the merit of a painter as to who should have patronage. At present Martin considers that a bias is given towards those who are Royal Academicians. His patrons Lord de Tabley and Sir George Beaumont, favoured a series of artists, some Academicians, others not. But the public taste and patronage is "diverted by the title 'RA'".<sup>137</sup>

Mr. Morrison asks how one could have an exhibition without a body to select and Martin concedes that there must be a selection committee but that it should be made up of artists exhibiting at a venue for two or three years. The question of

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<sup>135</sup> SC36 q. 870, p. 75.

<sup>136</sup> SC36 q. 875, p. 75.

<sup>137</sup> SC36 q. 884, p. 76.



whether it should be made up of figures that could not benefit from the selection, i.e. non-artists, is dismissed, as some expertise of art would be needed. In fact perhaps the work might be split into categories where oil painters or sculptures judged on work in their own medium. However each artists should have a general knowledge of art enough to judge work in another media.

Mr. Ewart suggests the perhaps the Government should be the body to award the premiums and it is the various societies that should enter into free competition. The chairman then suggests that perhaps all the societies should stand on an equal footing of non-interference by the Government. Martin suggests that if Royal patronage was taken away then societies would stand more equally. Mr. Ewart suggests that the appointment of Governmental premises to the Royal Academy gives the appearance of the society being a public institution, to which the witness agrees. Furthermore to have a military guard at the door also gives the air of pomp, he suggests. How much more so then the sharing of the National Gallery with the Royal Academy? Martin suggests that when this occurs, it may give Government more control in dictating that the Royal Academy should fulfil its role as a more public body. However, the main change must come, according to the witness, in who selects the pictures, because the Royal Academicians always give the best places to their won work. Mr. Hope asks whether Martin considers the present inquiry to be beneficial in instigating change. He says that he does.

**24 June 1836 John Burnet, qq. 921-957, pp. 79-82**

Mr. Burnet is best known as an engraver and has been particularly involved with engraving Mr. Wilkie's pictures. He claims that in Europe, the art of engraving is honoured, yet despite pupils from the Continent being sent to Britain to study, the art does not carry the same status in this country. He notes that "[t]he public consider engravers only as a set of ingenious mechanics, which is not the fact.

The art of engraving, the department I talk of, is more a translation of a picture than a copying; it is a process of difficult management”.<sup>138</sup> This is a preconception that is encouraged by the Royal Academy who do not allow engravers to have the full status of membership, and will confer on them only the title of ‘engraving associate’. This is worse than no membership at all, and does not happen on the Continent where engraving is considered as a high art. Thus engravers such as Sharpe and Raimbach will put ‘Member of the Imperial Academy in Vienna’ or of St. Petersburg on their work, rather than Associate of the Royal Academy. This lack of status means that many engravers of high quality never apply to the Royal Academy and so some of the engravers that are associates (excepting Mr. Bromley who is an excellent artist) are often not the best of engravers. Mr. Morrison asks whether the witness considers the British to be equal to, or superior to, other nations on the Continent, in engraving. Mr. Burnet considers that in this art, landscape painting, portrait painting and even historical painting that we are at least equal to Europe. However, he notes that opportunities for showing art (exhibitions or large public buildings) are rare and that “...it is of no use buying old pictures as specimens for our instruction, if when we have arrived at a complete knowledge, it turns out there is no demand for our talent...”.<sup>139</sup>

Mr. Hope attempts to ascertain from the witness whether any inferiority is due to, or at least has been averted by the Royal Academy, but Mr. Burnet does not consider that Britain is inferior. He notes that the Royal Academy often does not have the room to teach certain branches of art, noting an instance that he:

...saw in Munich a young man constructing a design in historical composition in a great room of the academy; there were perhaps seven or eight lay figures set up in groups with draperies, and arranged in his own manner; now there is no opportunity of doing that here, consequently it is carrying the art of design much further.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> SC36 q. 924, p. 79.

<sup>139</sup> SC36 q. 930, p. 80.

<sup>140</sup> SC36 q. 935, p. 80.



Burnet also notes that sometimes it is a waste for the Royal Academy to send a student to Rome because "...he seldom comes back a much better painter than when he went out; though he sees the finest models at Rome, and the finest pictures..."<sup>141</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks Mr. Burnet how he would improve the encouragement given to engraving and the witness considers this would be done by have a public room devoted specifically to engraving, so that it would raise the status of the art. This could happen in the new National Gallery and it would help every student to have a better knowledge of engraving.

Mr. Burnet does not consider that the art of engraving has progressed much since the work of Sharpe, Woollet or Strange, although the emphasis is now perhaps on finer detail. There are perhaps more copies made because of the introduction of steel engraving, which takes more copies than a copper plate.

Dr. Bowring asks whether the witness considers the art of engraving in France to be equal to Britain. Burnet does not think this is the case but that "...there is a certain art of engraving that is polished cutting and regular work; but we do not consider the art there has advance, nor do they think so themselves, as they try to imitate the English artists"<sup>142</sup>

Mr. Brotherton asks whether there are many students willing to learn engraving, to which the witness answers that there are many. He considers however that this is simply due to the attraction of entering into a successful business, and not whether the particular student has any talent for drawing, or any general taste. Drawing is essential to engraving. The Member of Parliament asks whether there is any present education that offers elementary teaching of drawing and Burnet

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<sup>141</sup> SC36 q. 936, p. 80.

suggests there is not. He himself went to the Trustees Academy in Edinburgh where he "...got a knowledge of drawing and light and shade, and also colouring".<sup>143</sup> He considers that there should be a school like this in every town: "[t]hey cannot begin too soon to teach them [students]...".<sup>144</sup> Brotherton suggests that schools on the Lancastrian model could be used to teach drawing as easily as reading and writing; to which the witness agrees.

Mr. Ewart picks up on the issue of drawing and after his question, Burnet notes that deficiency in drawing "...is the greatest fault".<sup>145</sup> Ewart then asks whether a knowledge of anatomy and botany should be extended, even to mechanics, in order that they will be good engravers. Burnet says that yes, those subjects are important, noting that "...we learn anatomy, &c. under the heading of drawing".<sup>146</sup>

The witness makes three final points: he reiterates the need for a room specifically for exhibition of engraving. He has not had any problem with copyright since his work is usually too large to copy. Thirdly, he suggests that engravers should be able to study the fine prints at the British museums without "...circuitous applications" because "...it is of more use to engravers these fine prints are, than to any other class of people; you have the opportunity of comparing your own works with those who have gone before you, and you are able to draw some inference from them".<sup>147</sup>

**28 June 1836 George Clint Esq. qq. 958-1049, pp. 82-7**

**Members present: Ewart, Bowring, Brotherton, Pusey and Hope.**

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<sup>142</sup> SC36 q. 943, p. 81.

<sup>143</sup> SC36 q. 948, p. 81.

<sup>144</sup> SC36 q. 948, p. 81.

<sup>145</sup> SC36 q. 952, p. 81.

<sup>146</sup> SC36 q. 955, p. 82.

<sup>147</sup> SC36 q. 957, p. 82.



George Clint is a painter, and was an associate of the Royal Academy for fourteen years before resigning because he could not wait any longer to become a Royal Academician. He felt that it was a degrading position to be in because election to membership of the society is based on the prerequisites of talent and good moral character – after such a long period of time the implication is that he is short of one or the other.

Clint feels that the associates are disadvantaged, and that in fact they receive no special treatment as Clint's paintings have been hung very badly. Clint also feels that when the associates are voted for, it is often based on favouritism. The voting does not work like University graduation in that an associate could be voted a member only a year after being an associate, whilst he has waited fourteen years. The voting is done in secret and each member has one vote. On the fourteenth year, Clint had seven votes, the next to him had eight and therefore achieved one higher, so Mr. Cockerell (the architect) and Mr. Gibson (the sculptor) were voted as members of the Royal Academy.

Generally Clint considers that the administration of the Royal Academy "...is very improper indeed" and he details why:

...in the first place I have no doubt that there is a great deal of partiality in the elections; in the next, they are under no responsibility, no check, no control; and again, the number of artists of high talent are so numerous, that I consider it a great injustice to them that a small number of persons should have such a high honour attached to them.<sup>148</sup>

The witness suggests the remedy could not really be to do away with self-election, but to get rid of the position of associate, and enlarge the membership of the academy, "...for those two classes [associate and full academician] have a

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<sup>148</sup> SC36 q. 987, p. 84.

most powerful tendency to demoralize each other”.<sup>149</sup> He further explains that “[o]ne class become sycophants, the other despots...”.<sup>150</sup>

Dr. Bowring suggest however, that unless self-election is done away with, the problems of the Royal Academy might continue. Clint agrees with this and notes that there should be some form of easy appeal. At present, one appeals to the King, but he is not as easy to access as a public officer would be (“...the Minister for the Home Department surround[ed] ...with competent judges”, suggests Bowring<sup>151</sup>). Generally, Clint believes the key issue is that the Royal Academy is a private institution with the appearance of a public one. Ewart suggests no preference should be given to any society to which Clint agrees, though noting that in the past, the Royal Academy was instrumental in improving the arts. However this is not the case now.

Mr. Burnet considers that the Royal Academy puts self-interest before the advancement of art in the country, and this is evidenced by its selection process. On many occasions artists are selected who do not then continue painting, or who retire or who have died, but their names are not taken off the register, and so their places (which even if only five or six, which is a large amount when the total of members is only forty) cannot be taken by active artists. This smacks of self-preservation. On two occasions at least also, the actual rules of the society, as regards membership being solely for those living in Britain, have been floated. Although the witness believes that it is important to attract great painters, the rules should either be adhered to or not. He knows of only one other painter who was an associate as long as himself, and only one who resigned from being an associate (though he is not sure why the painter resigned).

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<sup>149</sup> SC36 q. 989, p. 84.

<sup>150</sup> SC36 q. 990, p. 84.

<sup>151</sup> SC36 q. 1000, p. 84.



Mr. Ewart asks what benefits there are to being a Royal Academician. The witness explains that there is professorship, payment to attend meetings, management of the society and a pension fund. The pension is also shared by the associate, but at a lower amount (this is payable to a widow too). Generally however the witness considers that the main injustice is the way that the walls of the academy (during the exhibition) are treated like the private property of the Academicians.

When asked about the fitness of the royal Academy to be a school of architecture, the witness answers that he does not consider it is, for how can oil painters judge architecture? He notes that there are also only five architects in the Royal Academy at present: Sir John Soane, Sir Robert Smirke, Mr. Wilkins, Sir Jeffrey Wyatville and Mr. Cockerell. But Clint point out, there are 300 in the country. Mr. Barry, though eligible has not applied to the Royal Academy.

Mr. Ewart asks whether Mr. Clint considers whether the reasons why a Society of Architects has been established is because only five are represented in the Royal Academy membership. The witness thinks this might be the case but does not know whether the rule stating that a Royal Academician cannot be the member of any other society, will have an effect in this case.

**28 June 1836 Benjamin Robert Haydon Esq. qq. 1050-1125, pp. 88-97**

Mr. Haydon is a celebrated painter who has considered the issue of academies and their effect on the standards of art. In line with Waagen's evidence, he agrees that they have encouraged mannerism and mediocrity. He notes that until Louise the XIV, there were associations, but these were simply voluntary groups and not dictatorial of standards. The ancient Greeks did not have academies, all came from schools and there have been no greater artists than Giotto, Massaccio, Leonardo da Vinci, Barolomeo, Michel Angelo, Raphael, Giogione, Titian,

Corregio, who "...were all produced from schools, and *before* academies". He goes on "I consider academies all over Europe were signals of distress thrown out to stop the decay of art, but which have failed most egregiously, and rather hastened it".<sup>152</sup> He goes on to say "...for kings thought all over Europe, by dignifying members with titles, they would produce genius; it has not succeeded; the result of that is proved".<sup>153</sup>

The witness considers that England has not escaped the evil of the academy and notes that

...[p]revious to the Royal Academy, there were Wren, the architect, Hogarth, the satiric painter, Reynolds, Barry, Wilson, Gainsborough, Banks, Gibbons, Roubilliac, &c. [footnote mentioning Flaxman, though a student, was refused the gold medal] and certainly there have been no such men since; though it has been the fashion of the academy to run down Barry, because he could not colour, and was deficient in light and shade, Dr. Johnson says "There is a grasp of mind in his works, that no other English work possesses". The Adelphi pictures are a set of pictures to illustrate a principle, like the great works of Greece and Italy; they are the finest things done in England by an English artist (though Fuseli's Milton Gallery is more poetical); Barry's work is at the Society of Arts. Dr. Johnson was right, though of art, technically, he knew nothing.<sup>154</sup>

The origin of the institution, Haydon considers to have been corrupt and based on the monopoly of power. The organisation is effectively private, being consented to by George III but not accepting the need for a charter by George IV in case it should make them responsible to the public.

He considers that on the whole the teaching is acceptable, although he suggests that, as there is a keeper of the antique, there should also be a keeper of life drawing because at present, each academician no matter whether an historical or a landscape painter, takes turns to each life drawing, often giving contrasting

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<sup>152</sup> SC36 q. 1053, p. 88.

<sup>153</sup> SC36 q. 1054, p. 88.

<sup>154</sup> SC36 q. 1055, p. 88.



instruction. Mr. Ewart asks what the process of admission is. One applies to the keeper of the antique through a gentleman who can attest to one's moral character and, although a drawing is submitted, a drawing must also be made in person, so that one can prove the original submission was from the same hand. After that each day, the keeper comes to correct the drawings of the pupil. Fuseli was an inspiring pupil when the witness studies at the Royal Academy.

Fundamentally, it is the exclusiveness and injustice of the Royal Academy that Haydon complains about. He has been ill-treated and until recently, such is the power of the academy, that other painters have been frightened to be associated with Haydon or seen to oppose the society in case they are penalised. Now, there is more support. His problems with the Royal Academy began in the early nineteenth-century when after his first picture was successful, his second painting "Denatatus" was given a place in the dark in the exhibition of the society and was ignored. The painting, based on principles drawn from the Elgin marbles and the subject on which he lectures, had been very well received while it was being painted (his studio was full of people of fashion). But when the finished piece was exhibited in such a poor location, it suggested to public and patrons alike that the work was not of any use. Mr. Haydon complained to the Committee and specifically Sir Martin Archer Shee. He tried to become an associate of the Academy for two years running, but was not vote for even to be an associate. Afterwards, he sent the same painting to the British Gallery, where it received the premium and the great prize. Thus, although the witness admits to complaining about the academy, it was not an unprovoked attack.

The witness goes on to note that he founded a school, producing Eastlake, the Landseers, Harvey, Lance and Chatfield but that, if ever the academy knew the student was a pupil of Haydon's, they would not accept them. However, when unaware of the tutoring they would, displaying the prejudice that had built up against the witness in the Royal Academy.

Haydon explains that his first public clash with the Royal Academy was in 1812, when he wrote in the *Examiner*, about his suspicions that the society was not simply interested in the cause of art. This was because, when voting for a professor of anatomy, the voting seemed to favour Sir Anthony Carlisle, and not Sir Charles Bell. The former had:

...written in "The Artist" that anatomy was perfectly *useless*, and he was perfectly convinced it was without avail in the art; Sir Charles Bell had published a most beautiful work on the anatomy of expression. There was a contest for the professorship, and I myself canvassed several academicians; I found them determined to elect Sir Anthony in opposition to Sir Charles Bell, except Mr. Hoppner, and though he was a private friend of Sir Anthony Carlisle, he told him in his conscience he could not vote for him. Then arose my suspicions of the sincerity of the academicians for the benefit of high art or the advance of the taste of the people; for this was a palpable instance of a most extraordinary nature; because they rejected the most competent man who had written in favour of a science, and preferred the one who had written against it, for the interest of the artist.<sup>155</sup>

As regards historical painting, Haydon explains why he believes that it has not been advanced in England, attributing mainly to the widespread destruction of art during the Reformation. He continues:

I think that obstructed the arts entirely in this country, and I think portrait painting got a-head from the neglect of Government; and painting being no longer a matter of State protection, it has never recovered itself. It went on in that condition till George the Second's time; then appeared the native artist, Hogarth; and then the King (George the Third), under the supposition of advancing the art, founded the Royal Academy, which, from the state of the country, and the patronage of portrait painting, being the only part of the art which obtained a market, has done nothing but embody portrait painters in power to the destruction of high art altogether. And though, from the character of the English, the native vigour of the English character and its constitutional habits, it has contrived to obtain a high character in every other species of art except historical painting, because there is always a market among individuals,

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<sup>155</sup> SC36 q. 1069, p. 91.



historical painting alone suffers from the want of State patronage, as in the reign of Edward the Third.<sup>156</sup>

The witness sees that portrait painting in the Royal Academy has superseded historical painting and this he equates with the favouring of financial gain instead of high art. He considers that the taste for historical painting has diminished, even among the nobility who should be the highest purveyors of taste. Yet in a sense, Haydon considers that:

...we owe an everlasting obligation to portrait painting, for had there been none after the reformation, the art would have gone out entirely; and the desire to be painted, from the domestic feelings of the English, which are very strong, has kept the art continually afloat from the destruction of the Catholic religion to the foundation of the Royal Academy, which embodied the *esprit du corps* of portrait painters in despotic power, when it was too powerful before, for it killed Hussey, a man of genius, patronized by the Duke of Northumberland, and embarrassed Hogarth.<sup>157</sup>

Dr. Bowring asks whether portrait painting is actually an important element in historical painting. Haydon suggests that this is a debatable issue and depends how portraits are introduced. For example, in Raphael's painting of the Temple of Jerusalem, Pope Julius II is portrayed amongst characters such as Heliodorus, in a scene professing to be 1, 500 years before. Firstly, it is anachronistic, but also there is a difference between the portrait painter and the historical painter:

Portrait is the historical record of great men and beautiful women, existing at a certain time; but as the finest expression in portrait must be seen before it can be done, there is an end of invention, the highest quality of genius. The portrait painter transfers and keeps the likeness; the historical painter invents, with a model before him, which he will use to realize the characters he imagines, without being at all like what he sees. The historical painter's effort is a portrait of what he imagines; the portrait painter's, of what he sees.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> SC36 q. 1070, pp. 91-2.

<sup>157</sup> SC36 q. 1072, p. 92.

<sup>158</sup> SC36 q. 1073, p. 92.

Mr. Ewart asks what actually constitutes historical painting. Haydon uses Fuseli's subdivisions stating that the genre is made up of the epic, the dramatic and the histories, although these are seldom separated.

The chairman then asks about the British Gallery<sup>159</sup> which the witness considers has done an immense amount of good for art by showing old pictures, although it was opposed by the Royal Academy at its inception and complained about their showing off work in the *catalogue raisonné*. He notes that now, however, under the influence of Mr. Seguier, the academy is gaining more power over the society and it is less independent.

Haydon considers that if there had not been the reformation and the subsequent neglect of the Government, historical painting would be as advanced as it is on the Continent.

The witness also considers that where exhibitions are badly hung, and they are competing in terms of colouring, for example, that the public does not learn anything from them, and in fact they learn instead the wrong principles. As an alternative way of extending taste, Haydon considers that the schools of the Royal Academy should be extended, that there should be a central school in London and branch schools around the country, in the large towns. He would abolish the status of royal academician and have a constituency of artists who could vote for the management, after three years of exhibiting – he would restore the principle of the chartered body of artists, which was the original constitution. The constituency would be made up of six hundred artists (out of the 2, 000 that work in London).

Ewart then asks the witness whether he considers that drawing should be part of elementary education. Haydon believes it should be and that this would mean the

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<sup>159</sup> The British Institution.



improvement of public taste, and thus the demand for art. However, the witness considers that schools of design should not be attached to other institutions, but should be separate as they would otherwise be treated secondary.

Mr. Hope asks again about the constituency of artists, which Haydon proposes. The witness explains that he would have professors of every branch in this body, though not engravers. This is because he "...consider[s] them as translators; you cannot rank them as inventors. I think that art is greatly indebted to engravers for the diffusion of works; but I think they might be honoured with the title if they please, as abroad, without the right of voting...".<sup>160</sup> On Mr. Ewart's question, the witness notes that he is in favour of awarding university professors in painting and sculpture and considers, like Burke, that modern taste, even at the highest end of society, will not be extended if art is not acknowledged at university level.

Mr. Ewart asks what Haydon's understanding is of the patronage in Greece and Italy, in the past. The witness answers that "[a] spirit of patriotism in Greece, and a spirit of religious feeling, but always a matter of state and Catholic feeling in Italy...".<sup>161</sup> He believes the same standard of art would occur in England if the same plan was adopted, but notes that an institution such as the Royal Academy would be loath to aid this cause. They have been asked to advise before (about the monument for Waterloo) but they made no response. Instead there should be an annual Parliamentary vote to decide money to be spent on public commissions. This already happens in Parliament for the Irish Academy. A similar situation exists for German artists who are employed by the King of Bavaria to work on the King's palace in Munich.

Mr. Pusey asks the witness whether he considers fresco in painting to aid historical painting. Haydon replies that "...[f]resco is apt to bring on a species of manufactory as was even the case in some of the chambers of the Vatican. The

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<sup>160</sup> SC36 q. 1098, pp. 93-4.

most perfect works of art in Greece were easel works”.<sup>162</sup> He holds this view despite Michel Angelo considering “...oil painting was fit for children”. He notes that he could not have said this if he had seen Titian’s “Peter Martyr”.<sup>163</sup>

Given that the witness desires this type of governmental support of the arts – how does he consider it best to distribute it? He considers that it should be of the benefit for all genres of painting and sculpture (to supply the National Gallery), as well as supporting designs in art and manufactures. He has continually tried to petition Government on this kind of support and always been told that ‘now is not the time’.<sup>164</sup> He considers also that the Royal Academy must be against this state support because if they supported it, he is sure it would be policy (and Sir George Beaumont has tried to introduce the idea). An example of a good use of public art would be the new Houses of Parliament for which paintings (superintended by Mr. Barry) connected with British history could be commissioned.

Predictably, Haydon is against the Royal Academy having premises in the National Gallery, because of their corrupt constitution. Instead the space should be devoted to a collection of British art. He considers that this is a long-term goal over years, the Louvre has taken a hundred years to get where it is.

Nowhere as Haydon seen an exhibition devoted to an English school. Ultimately Haydon believes that there is no hope for historical painting unless the Government supports it – because commissions support portrait painting. Mr. Pusey asks whether there should be encouragement to produce alter pieces for every church. Haydon agrees with this but explains that opportunities to do this have recently been lost. This he considers was due to the “delicacy of

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<sup>161</sup> SC36 q. 1104, p. 94.

<sup>162</sup> SC36 q. 1111, p. 94.

<sup>163</sup> SC36 q. 1112, pp. 94-5.

<sup>164</sup> SC36 q. 1114, p. 95.



breeding”,<sup>165</sup> and the witness claims that it is through this that the institution of art has been governed until now. To sum up Ewart asks whether the witness approves “...of academies as a means of conveying instruction...”.<sup>166</sup> Haydon agrees with this and hopes that the inquiry will have affects in Europe too where academies are complained about by the artist’s there.

**1 July 1836 William Wilkins Esq. qq. 1126-1232, pp. 97-103**

**Members present: Ewart, Bowring, Pusey, Brotherton and Strutt.**

William Wilkins is the architect of the University of London and the National Gallery and he is questioned regarding the space apportioned to the Royal Academy. This is half of the building and Mr. Ewart and Dr. Bowring attempt to ascertain whether these rooms, if they had not been intended for the Royal Academy could be used for exhibition. The architect explains that there are certain restrictions, such as the supporting walls (to cope with the weight from the iron sky lights above) to the restriction of light from the closeness of buildings. There was also need for a staircase so that access could be had from Castle Street. However, the architect concedes that there could be sculpture galleries where the Royal Academy is allocated, and that it was always envisaged that the Royal Academy would not be permanent residents.<sup>167</sup> Ewart stresses that the public do not have access to the Royal Academy part of the National Gallery.

Mr. Wilkins is himself a Royal Academician and he received the instructions from Government. The Chairman is keen to establish whether the possible future of the National Gallery has been considered when the Royal Academy may have vacated the rooms. He notes that there could not be continuous galleries because

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<sup>165</sup> SC36 q. 1124, p. 96.

<sup>166</sup> SC36 q. 1125, p. 97.

<sup>167</sup> SC36 q. 1171, p. 99.

of the staircase, but that they could become galleries. However the witness assures Mr. Ewart that the staircases would have been designed in the way he designed them, whether the Royal Academy was taking up residence or not.

Wilkins considers that it will take at least fifty years of selective collecting to fill up the building. Eventually however Ewart draws the witness into admitting that the Royal Academy being in the National Gallery has prevented any gallery being available for exhibiting ancient sculpture. However, Wilkins considers that the light provided would not offer much, compared to the light in the British Museum. The Ministers in fact did not contemplate bringing sculpture to the building.

Mr. Wilkins notes that there would have been more light but for "...the amateur architects... who induced the gentlemen in the neighbourhood to excite the parish against the proposed position of the building, and they unfortunately succeeded".<sup>168</sup> The reason being that they considered the portico of St. Martin's to be obscured by the National Gallery (from Pall Mall East), but it is actually obscured by the College of Physicians (the buildings on the right-hand side). Thus the best cannot be made of the galleries. The galleries form divisions to which Wilkins has identified as being for Flemish paintings because they are small scale and need to be looked at intimately. However he notes that there is at present no Flemish collection. He is also not involved in the division of the rooms for particular subjects, which is down to the trustees. He does not know them all by name, although he listed Lord Aberdeen, Lord Farnborough and Sir Martin Archer Shee.

When asked by Mr. Ewart whether he has made a point of not doing so, because institutions such as the Louvre are more a celebration of architecture than being for the purpose. He implies that the old Louvre and the new gallery do not, in

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<sup>168</sup> SC36 q. 1206, p. 101.



effect provide very much space, although more than the National Gallery does in its entirety. He is then asked about the Pinacotheca of Munich and he does not agree that it has any better lighting or organisation than his design for the National Gallery. Though in his opinion, he is reliant on having just seen the plans and heard the opinion of Mr. Ridley Colbourne. He has never been there. He considers that the space is certainly sufficient and that, for the exhibition of pictures, the National Gallery will be one of the best galleries in Europe.

Mr. Wilkins has considered the bringing of the cartoons from Hampton Court but although there is adequate light for them, he does not know whether the heating will affect them adversely. On a final point, Mr. Ewart asks how much more of the gallery will be handed over for the use of the Royal Academy for their exhibition. Wilkins says that it will be at least half as much as they have now. However, he does not consider that this is giving unfair advantage to the society. It will simply allow them to exhibit more paintings by people who are not members.

**1 July 1836 Thomas Leverton Donaldson Esq. qq. 1233-1254, pp. 103-105**

Mr. Donaldson is the honorary secretary of the Institute of British Architects, a corresponding member of the French Institute and a member of several academies. He does not consider that the Royal Academy provides very good provision for architects. Firstly, lectures on perspective cannot be delivered orally, but must be taught practically. The lectures on architecture were good and very inspiring, but these were not continued for some years. Also there should be changes made in lectures to keep new and "...with a different spirit".<sup>169</sup> Lecturers should therefore just be appointed for two years. The library is very good at the Royal Academy but was only open on Monday during the day and for two hours in the evening. It is now open on Thursday also. There are some architectural casts but they

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<sup>169</sup> SC36 q. 1237, p. 103.

were not looked after and were left in the life drawing room. There were apparently a lot more in cases in the cellar. These were not made available to the architectural students. The prizes were very inspiring for the students but there was a problem with the judgment about the work, since the majority of members who had a vote were painters and sculptors. These artists "...were more apt to choose the drawings which were calculated to catch the eye than those executed with severer simplicity".<sup>170</sup>

The witness considers it essential that there should be a national institution for encouraging architecture, and that private schools are not appropriate. This is because professional architects are generally working and would not have time to teach full time. Those who were not successful architects may be attracted to running a school, but they would obviously not be ideal. However, a public academy would attract high quality architecture, especially if their teaching periods were only for two years.

The architectural education system at present is not very successful because a student is under a professional architect for five years (costing from £200 to £500):

He is supposed to acquire the knowledge of his profession by taking the run of the office, seeing the course of practice, and making out drawings for the architect to whom he is bound. The master is not supposed to be under any obligation to watch the progress of the pupil, to instil into his mind the elements of the art. He only sees that the drawings he has to prepare answer the master's purpose in regard to the jobs in hand. A pupil rarely if ever makes out a specification ere he leaves the office; in fact, he is seldom capable of doing it, or of measuring works, abstracting quantities and making out a bill.<sup>171</sup>

To which the witness agrees.

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<sup>170</sup> SC36 q. 1241, p. 104.

<sup>171</sup> SC36 q. 1244, p. 104.



The chairman asks how many Royal Academicians are architects. The witness answers that the number is very small in relation to the amount of architects that are active and that because of the reputation of the society, it is to the detriment of architects who are not members. If one is not a member they are seen to be at a lower standard than the Royal Academy architects. There should be no restriction on membership if the academy claims to promote art and science.

From other witnesses it had been noted that the Royal Academy had a rule preventing any member of that institution from being a member of any other. This is something Donaldson is familiar with and notes that it has affected Mr. Cockerell, who wanted to play an active role in the society, but the committee of the Royal Academy ruled against this suggestion.

Finally Donaldson is asked how successful the Royal Academy exhibition is for architectural drawings. The witness suggests that architecture is not easily understood by everyone, but those who are interested and have any experience of the art, find exhibitions generally extremely useful. However, at the Royal Academy:

...[t]he architectural drawings are put into a room of very inadequate size, and mixed up with oil paintings; the consequence has been the introduction of a meretricious style of architectural drawings, in order to be able to compete with the brilliant effect of oil colours, for the quiet architectural drawing with a simple effect, has been overpowered by the paintings; besides, plans are excluded. Very frequently the great beauty of a design consists in the plan which is not exhibited, and thus the architectural exhibitor is expected to be rather a painter than an architect.<sup>172</sup>

**1 July 1836 T. C. Hoiland Esq. qq. 1255-1305, pp. 105-111**

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<sup>172</sup> SC36 q. 1254, p. 105.

Mr. Hofland is the secretary to the Society of British Architects. In relation to the other witnesses, he believes that the Royal Academy is "...injurious to the arts, and that they do not advance the fine arts in this or any other country".<sup>173</sup> He believes that the Royal Academy is a private institution with all the appearance of a public one. Yet sixty-seven years ago when it was formed, it was actually constituted to rival another society. Therefore the rule to exclude or prevent Royal Academy members also being members of other societies was created with that purpose in mind. This has been difficult for those artists establishing the Society of British Architects because it has prevented any of them being able to apply for the honours offered by the Royal Academy, and has stopped Royal Academy artists from becoming a member of the Society of British Artists. A few Royal Academy artists have exhibited their paintings at the latter institution, but Mr. Northcote was threatened with expulsion from the Royal Academy for doing so.

Hofland suggest that when the Royal Academy was established, the forty members and twenty associates represented the state of art in England, but now the number is too low. Generally, the witness believes that the Royal Academy system of self-election gives the Royal Academy a sense of a closed corporation. However where usually that sort of organisation is only damaging to a local area, "...the baneful influence of the academy, as to its exclusive powers and the honours bestowed upon it, extends throughout the British empire; every artist feels it in the remotest part of Great Britain".<sup>174</sup> The Royal Academy is a monopoly with "...the patronage of the King Positively, and virtually, the patronage of the State".<sup>175</sup> The society is given state premises, which, during their annual exhibition, are treated as the academies own since they hang 9 out of 10 of their own members' paintings in the best places. The witness himself has suffered from the injustice of this system.

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<sup>173</sup> SC36 q. 1257, p. 105.

<sup>174</sup> SC36 q. 1266, p. 106.

<sup>175</sup> SC36 q. 1268, p. 106.



Mr. Ewart asks Hofland whether he considers the Royal Academy may become a useful institution. The witness suggests it could with modification, but it should just have the mechanisms that make it a monopoly taken away. Government should not control it too closely, because the witness "...would prefer free trade in art".<sup>176</sup> The Government should support the cause of art by buying paintings for a national collection, by commissioning historical works and from a truly National Gallery. The chairman asks whether this idea of 'free trade' has always been the system when the arts have flourished most, and Hofland believes that it is, and was the system when the Royal Academy was established. The likes of Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, Hogarth, Barry, West and Banks have not been surpassed. But the witness believes that before that time, another impulse encouraged art "...if we go back to the time of Greece and Rome, we shall still find it was patronage, and not academies, that created art; the household gods of the Romans created and maintained sculpture, and in Greece the heathen mythology created employment in that art, and in Italy the catholic religion, patronizing the sacred historical painting, was the great cause, in my opinion, of its flourishing; but when the academies were commenced, I would say the art began to decline; I believe there were few academies till about the time of the Caracci, when the academies commenced, and the arts declined; certainly they declined from the time of Louis the Fourteenth".<sup>177</sup> Thus, Mr. Ewart concludes that the witness is suggesting that the arts flourish when there is a true demand for them. The witness agrees and notes how because of the demand for portraiture and landscape, these areas have been encouraged and have reached a high standard in England.

The witness considers that "...national schools of designs, for instruction in arts of design, would be valuable, and, above all, a national gallery".<sup>178</sup> As well as

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<sup>176</sup> SC36 q. 1269, pp. 106-107.

<sup>177</sup> SC36 q. 1271, p. 107.

<sup>178</sup> SC36 q. 1273, p. 107.

national galleries, Hofland considers that local galleries would also be valuable. "I will instance the small city of Carlisle, very far in the north. I believe in the first exhibition they sold nine pictures; they progressively advanced in sale in three or four years to 30 pictures, and by that means evidently diffusing a taste in the neighbourhood for the fine arts".<sup>179</sup> Dr. Bowring asks about the accessibility of art and the opportunities there are for viewing statutes and paintings in churches. The questioner notes that churches are rarely open, except for services. The witness agrees and says "I deplore the state of things in this country; Westminster Abbey, for instance; every Englishman feels he is shut out from the study of those fine specimens of Gothic architecture and works of sculpture there erected".<sup>180</sup> The same is true of all churches in the country. Also the private collections of gentlemen are harder to access than in other countries. This is partly because the 'galleries' in private houses are often also the family's living quarters, whereas these two areas often separate in other countries. However, there is a greater tendency towards exclusivity in Britain.

Generally, artists have a less respected position in Britain compared to France, for example. "In France an artist is looked upon in a very different point of view to what he is in this country. In France he is infinitely more respected; he is patronized by the state, and feels his weight and consequence".<sup>181</sup> This is not helped by the honours given to Royal Academicians that shows their fellow artists in a less elevated position. However it is also a symptom of the lack of knowledge about art in the country. If a "...love of art and the knowledge of art become diffused in this country, art and artist will be more respected necessarily".<sup>182</sup> The witness does consider that taste is diffusing slowly. He considers that in some respect, the Royal Academy with their annual exhibition has helped to at least awaken an interest in art, which will then become more knowledgeable over years of interest. The same holds true for the difficulty with

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<sup>179</sup> SC36 q. 1274, p. 107.

<sup>180</sup> SC36 q. 1276, p. 107.

<sup>181</sup> SC36 q. 1288, p. 108.



which public libraries can be accessed. Even the library at the British Museum with "...the routine required to get access to it"<sup>183</sup> makes some people disinclined to go to it. This is different from the situation in France. Mr. Ewart attempts to sum of this particular part of the discussion by asking:

[n]ow let me ask you whether you do not think the French people themselves have a greater veneration for the name of an artist and a literary man than the English people have, and whether you do or do not attribute that result to the want of public exhibition of works of art and public libraries which give them a greater admiration for the persons who produce those works which they admire?<sup>184</sup>

To which the witness agrees.

As regards the affects of the British Institution on the cause of art, Hofland explains that the venue was organised because there was no location where young artists were shown fairly and could be sold (the Royal Academy was not intended for the sale of pictures). The Institution also awarded premiums in the different genres of art. This went on for some years until it was decide that, to advance the taste in art, an exhibition of old masters should take place. This limited the amount of time available to show modern works and partly brought about the creation of the Society of British Artists.

The Society of Painters in Water Colours was established because painting in water colour, though extremely English, was not allowed in the Royal Academy, it had to be only painting in oil colour. There were a great number of talented artists in this particular medium but when the society first began it struggled. However it was soon successful and became a monopoly in the same way as the Royal Academy. However because it was definitely a private institution (with no appearance of public support) it managed to transform and absorb rival

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<sup>182</sup> SC36 q. 1288, p. 108.

<sup>183</sup> SC36 q. 1293, p. 109.

<sup>184</sup> SC36 q. 1296, p. 109.

organisations. The Society of British Artists attracts artists because it is fair and gives equal wall space to members and non-members alike.

Though the Royal Academy does not have any official influence over the British Institution, there does seem to be some unofficial connection in that paintings already exhibited by Royal Academicians at the Royal Academy, are re-exhibited in the best places in the British Institutions. It almost seems as though it has become a branch of the Royal Academy. This has resulted in more painting beings sent to the Society of British Artists, and sold. Hofland outlines how much society raises for its exhibitors, and the witness then goes on to suggest that the State purchase some of the society's rooms for a School of Design, which could occupy them for seven months, leaving five months for the annual exhibition.

Hofland considers that the Royal Academy being given half of the National Gallery is very damaging to the other societies. Furthermore, when the Society of British Artists was being established the witness went to see the president of the Royal Academy. Sir Thomas Lawrence, and Mr. Philips and other influential members to make sure that the Royal Academy were not going to be extending their capacity for exhibition. This was why the Society of British Artists was established. The allocation of rooms in the National Gallery also reinforces the sense that, though the Royal Academy is actually a private society, it has the appearance of a public one.

**5 July 1836 John Pye Esq. qq. 1306-1364, pp. 111-117**

**Members present: Ewart, Strutt, Brotherton, Bowring, Lewis and Hope.**

Mr. Pye is a landscape engraver in London and he has found that there is little encouragement given the Royal Academy to engravers. All except die engravers



are excluded from being Royal Academicians, despite honours being given to historical painters, landscape painters, portrait painters, flower painters, sculptors, architects, watch chasers and enamel painters. Even though the King, honoured Sir Robert Strange with a Knighthood for his services to engraving, he was still not able to receive honours from the Royal Academy. However, the witness explains that engravers are not completely accepted, or rejected because they can only ever become associates of the Royal Academy. This is very different from other academies in Europe, such as those in Rome, Florence, Milan and Venice where engravers may become full academicians. In Paris some engravers have even had "...honourable distinctions conferred by the government, from the legion of honour to the title of baron".<sup>185</sup>

Mr. Pye believes that this state of affairs can be put down to personal feelings towards Sir Robert Strange at the time of the establishment of the Royal Academy (and he quotes Strange's own book on the Academy). This must be the case because the art of engraving is extremely advanced in Britain, and therefore there is no lack of merit. This high state of engraving is revealed because governments from countries on the Continent, such as France, sent their young students to Britain to study. Dr. Bowring asks the witness whether there are more engravers in Britain now than there were at the time of the Royal Academy's establishment. Mr. Pye believes there is and when Mr. Ewart asks him why the English line-engraver has been so successful, he replies thus:

I attribute the distinction of the English engraver to result from a new combination of the various qualities of nature and art in the plates they engrave, particularly so in regard to landscape engraving. The best plates engraved now appear to me as being free translations from pictures, instead of being cold rigid copies. They are entirely so with regard to effect – that quality by which the English School is distinguished, whether we speak of painting or engraving. The painter produces his picture by the aid of forms, lights and shadows, and varieties of warm and cold colours. The engraver copies the composition of the painter, and produces

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<sup>185</sup> SC36 q. 1309, pp. 111-112.

his effect, aided merely by different strengths of tints and gradations of black and white; and the most successful engravers often produce effects, with these very limited means, which fill the minds of spectators with a consciousness of the magnitude and great pleasurable varieties of nature (with very few exceptions) beyond any thing formerly done.<sup>186</sup>

Dr. Bowring is convinced that the encouragement for engravers has come because of the use of engravings in literature and Pye concedes that this is true to some extent, but that there is a "...growing intelligence" amongst engravers that is also advancing the art.<sup>187</sup> Mr. Pye would like to see either the role of engravers released from the Royal Academy completely, or for them to be accepted entirely by the society. The present situation, the witness believes, is preventing engravers from developing their ambition as artists and their interest in art generally, as well as affecting their financial status.

Mr. Pye does consider that, although the Royal Academy is a private institution, it has the appearance of a public one with its state apartments and the King signing its diplomas, it also likes to encourage this idea. But when applied to change the status of engraving, it reverts swiftly back to its status as a private organisation. The witness does not think there are any truly great engravers who are willing to degrade themselves and become associates of the Royal Academy. He points out that Strange, Woollett and Sharpe did not deign to gain any favour with the Royal Academy. The ignorance of the society towards line engravers has not prevented the growth of engraving in Britain, but has certainly affected the status of engravers in this country. Mr. Ewart asks the witness why it is that commercial enterprise has inspired engravers to become better artists. Pye answers that:

...engraving has in this country assumed a mechanical character; but it has assumed that mechanical character as a means only; its end has been of a higher and more artificial nature, resulting from the pride and ambition of the engraver rather than from any of that fair encouragement which

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<sup>186</sup> SC36 q. 1316, p. 113.

<sup>187</sup> SC36 q. 1321, p. 113.



inspires us with that self-respect which I submit ought, in a country like this, to attach to engravers, and which encouragement is extended to and forms the stamina and pride of people of every other profession whatsoever.<sup>188</sup>

In addition to changing the constitution of the Royal Academy, the witness suggests that each branch of art should be independent as in the National Institute of France that he holds in high esteem.

Mr. Ewart asks how many engravers are members in the Royal Academy in France. He lists M. Tardieu, Baron Desnoyers and M. Richomme, but he considers that there are four in total. Because of his apparent understanding of the French system of art, Mr. Pye is asked what he considers to be the reasons for all general higher status given to the arts in that country. The witness has difficulty answering the question but when drawn out does agree that the open access of work of fine art in the Louvre, even to the peasants has a major impact in extending a love of art among the population. He also sees that provincial galleries, such as those in Rouen are also very valuable. He has witnessed no rowdy behaviour, and does not see that the galleries, though open on Sunday, cause any adverse affects. Dr. Bowring asks “[i]s it not a pleasure likely to create feelings of thought on the part of the spectators?” To which Mr. Pye answers “[it] most certainly is; and a quiet feeling allied to happiness that brings no reaction in its train”.<sup>189</sup>

The witness has not thought about how he would change the Royal Academy, apart from in accepting engravers on an equal footing. He urges a “...kind of republic of the arts, to put them on equal terms...”.<sup>190</sup> The witness also considers that a portion of the National Gallery should be put aside for engraving. Mr. Brotherton asks the witness how he would encourage present engravers and Mr.

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<sup>188</sup> SC36 q. 1331, p. 115.

<sup>189</sup> SC36 q. 1344, p. 116.

<sup>190</sup> SC36 q. 1345, p. 116.

Pye considers that there is no better way than groups of artists coming together in each medium of art, and engaging with each other:

...[i]f they were brought together the painter and the engraver would publish in conjunction with each other their own works, for their mutual advantage, and they would become distributed in a degree through the world to amateurs, who would pay a fair price for them, instead of their being now circulated exclusively through this trade.<sup>191</sup>

The witness has not thought about how Government could encourage engraving, because it has not followed that policy up till that time. Generally though, the annual exhibition of engravings would not be that successful, but he would rather recommend a collection of good examples to be made for a permanent collection. If there was an annual exhibition, it should be judged impartially by a general body.

Engravers do not have the same opportunities for gaining public acknowledgment and patrons and there are many great engravers, whose only exposure is through print sellers and booksellers. Public exhibitions may therefore aid this acknowledgement and support of engraving nationally. Generally through Mr. Brotherton's questions, Mr. Pye concludes that engravers should either be full members of the Royal Academy, or not connected at all, and they should have more positive exposure for their talents, so that they are not any more at the mercy of the print sellers.

**5 July 1836 George Foggo Esq. qq. 1365-1382, pp. 117-122**

Mr. Foggo is mainly involved with historical art and has studied for seven years in the Imperial Academy at Paris and also at the Royal Academy in Somerset House, where he "...attended for the purpose of practice, but I cannot say for

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<sup>191</sup> SC36 q. 1348, p. 116.



instruction”.<sup>192</sup> He also studied for nine years in the celebrated school of Regnault. He has studied and written about the effects of academies on art. When asked his opinion, he explains that although in France, Italy and England the establishment of academies have been intended to prevent the decline in art. However instead they have been injurious to art and “...rules and regulations intended” to advance art failed. The witness continues “...academies are seminaries for the inculcation of idolatry in art. This is equally apparent in the worshippers of Le Brun and the admirers of Reynolds”.<sup>193</sup>

Mr. Foggo lists a number of instances in which the Royal Academy have been treated by others as a public institution, but have behaved in response as the private institution that they are. In the winter to 1818 to 1819, Foggo’s painting were not collected from the Custom House by the Royal Academicians (who would not do it without payment) had been asked to authorise their importation, after the artist had lived abroad for seventeen years. The effect of this was that Foggo lost the possible patronage of the Marquis d’Osmond. The academicians have also abused their relationship to Government by not opening out to the public the competition for designs for Lord Rodney’s statue (1783-84) and the Earl Cornwallis’ (1792).

Again in 1806, the cases of Nelson’s monument and others evince still greater hardihood; but in this affair Government was obliged to interfere; they were, nevertheless, allowed to act as judges over, and competitors with, those very rivals whose works they had previously rejected.<sup>194</sup>

The witness is asked how the Royal Academy differs from the other academies in Europe. Foggo states that although the Royal Academy was originally modelled on the academy in Paris, it differed in one main way, that the institution got its revenue from the Government and therefore its exhibition was free to enter,

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<sup>192</sup> SC36 q. 1368, p. 117.

<sup>193</sup> SC36 q. 1369, p. 118.

<sup>194</sup> SC36 q. 1372, pp. 118-119.

despite being solely of work by the members of the Academy. However, the French Institute did have its rules altered and the

...system of the academy was reformed ; it is now a government school only, or rather the three great means of influence formerly combined in their academy, the exhibition, the schools and the power of conferring degrees are separated, different boards having the management of either. The honours are entrusted to a class of the institute, the exhibitions to a committee acting under the minister of the household, and in correspondence with the director of the museum; and the great central school, or academy, is under the care of eight junior professors, who, like our visitors, attend in monthly rotation, but superintended by four senior directors.<sup>195</sup>

Generally, the witness considers that the power and status conferred on the President and the academician of the Royal Academy is too great and affects the management of other institutions such as the British Museum and National Gallery. The Royal Academy can enter any exhibition for no charge, no student is permitted to draw at the British Museum without one of their members recommending them.

To copy any pictures in the royal collections at any palaces, it costs around £4. These works can be requested by Royal Academicians and are conveyed to their premises. The title of Royal Academy is also looked on with more respect often than 'Knt. Or Bart.' In catalogues the title is used to indicate quality and art, regardless of talent, is given a higher price than any other artist. Other artists must not charge as much as a Royal Academy artist in the same exhibition, whereas they may charge the price for their painting in another exhibition. Generally there is a real sense that the title of Royal Academician has to be minded and

[t]he election to those honours being entirely and without control in their hands, debases the young artist to a state of feigned humility inimical to

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<sup>195</sup> SC36 q. 1373, p. 119.



the aspirations of high art. On the other hand, *condescension* is the least offensive, though not the least insulting part of an academician's deportment to the untitled clients.<sup>196</sup>

Again Foggo complains of the rule that prevents any other painter from retouching or varnishing their painting.

The Royal Academy also stands in the way of the establishment of private schools because the schools of the society

...virtually exclude men who have already felt the want of studying nature; they deprive private instructors of their pupils, prevent men of the highest talent from opening establishments and cause those from mutual instruction to languish; they are therefore positively injurious. Hogarth, who learned in a school by mutual instruction, foretold that an academy would ruin genuine art, and Dr. Adam Smith has proved that it never can be otherwise.<sup>197</sup>

Foggo explains the ill-effects of having a rotation of lecturers: "...with us... landscape painters presume to descant on the human form, the contempt of the pupil is directed to the instructor as much as to the system, and forgetting his inferiority in other departments he becomes conceited, and ceases to strive after serious improvement".<sup>198</sup>

In the French academy medals and awards are handled better because the students must work independently. In London there is no guarantee, though a Royal Academy must propose a student's work, and a sketch must be provided that a student has actually done the work. Again Foggo quotes Adam Smith in saying "...that the disciple of colleges seems to presume perfect wisdom in the one order, and the greatest weakness and folly in the other."<sup>199</sup> To illustrate this he remembers a time when, as a student at the Royal Academy, he was nominated for a gold medal. The rules noted that figures should not be less than twenty-four

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<sup>196</sup> SC36 q. 1380, p. 120.

<sup>197</sup> SC36 q. 1380, pp. 120-121.

<sup>198</sup> SC36 q. 1380, p. 121.

inches high and Foggo produced figures twenty-seven inches high. However contrary instruction put up on the wall of the academy, were mistaken in suggesting that figures must be between twenty and twenty-four inches. Unwilling to admit the error, the committee rejected Foggo's painting.

Generally speaking, the Royal Academy rejects many artists who are already exhibitors at other institutions and who are artists of considerable talent. Thus the academy can take advantage of other artists to increase the income that they attract from their annual exhibition, but do not offer any service for that.

Foggo concludes:

[i]f I were to venture an opinion with regard to the remedy that the artists might have for all their grievances, it would be to leave the arts on the same system of free trade that every other department of industry is allowed to follow, but at the same time, if Parliament would allow an exhibition of national talent to take place in the National Gallery, before the pictures belonging to the nation are therein deposited, allowing every artist in the kingdom to send to that exhibition one or two pictures, to be arranged as the designs for the Parliament Houses have been, by a committee of the artists themselves, the public would become acquainted with what they as yet do not know, they would acquire a knowledge of the state of art as it actually is in this country; and having acquired a knowledge of what actually is performed or can be performed by the living artist, the artists themselves having also acquired that knowledge, I should willingly leave the result to circumstances and the energy of the artists and the people.<sup>200</sup>

The witness appeals to history to demonstrate the oppression caused by monopolies.

**8 July 1836 Mr. Wilkins qq. 1388-1438, pp. 122-126**

**Members present: Ewart, Brotherton, Morrison, Hope and Bowring.**

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<sup>199</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> SC36 q. 1381, p. 122.



The architect William Wilkins is further questioned regarding the authority and communication that was undergone in the construction and division of the rooms in the National Gallery. The witness explains that a National Gallery on that site was originally his idea, when he felt that the shops that were planned for that area would be a waste of a good site and "...as a Royal Academy had long been promised by different administrations to the public, I thought this would be a very admirable opportunity for uniting the two establishments, and making one building there".<sup>201</sup> The architect wrote to Lord Dover, who communicated to Lord Grey on the subject. His designs, plus two others from Mr. Nash and Mr. Cockerell were submitted, but it was not really a public competition. Wilkins was called at once to join the Committee that consists of seven or eight persons, including Lord Farnborough, Lord Ripon, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Ridley Colbourne, Mr. Hume, Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Rogers. This group was appointed by the Lords of Treasury. Wilkins did not have any contact with Mr. Seguier and Mr. Thwaites who have the guardianship of the gallery. The Committee did not have any experts to judge the best architectural plans.

Mr. Ewart asks the witness whether it:

...is a competent Committee, from their intimate acquaintance with the great works of the Italian schools of the sixteenth century, to propose the plan for a grand collection, and whether they are competent to judge of the originality and value of high works of art.<sup>202</sup>

Wilkins believes that there is an expertise for the Italian school, particularly Mr. Rogers, Mr. Ridley Colbourne and Lord Farnborough.

The chairman then asks more specific details about the building but the architect is not sure how high paintings are generally hung, although he assumed that they

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<sup>201</sup> SC36 q. 1401, p. 123.

<sup>202</sup> SC36 q. 1404, pp. 123-124.

would be hung as they are at present because paintings need to be seen in detail. As for fire-proofing, the witness explains that only the half that is to be the National Gallery is fire-proofed. The half allotted to the Royal Academy is not fire-proofed. It was thought to be too expensive (and problematic in terms of lowering the ceilings) for their apartments. However, the changes could be made, but Wilkins does not know how much this would cost. It emerges that there is a more permanent tenancy seemingly planned for the Royal Academy as the witness explains that the moving of the society from the premises he "...always considered it a bare possibility".<sup>203</sup> But the walls are generally how they would have been if the whole was a National Gallery. The chairman tries to ascertain whether the plan for the building was established before the insertion of the Royal Academy was considered, but the witness explains that this was the idea (his idea) for the building from the beginning. He explains "...it was my suggestion. Sir Martin Archer Shee had, very nearly about the same time, some communication with Lord Grey, reminding him of the promise that had been given to him; but that was a little subsequent to my original suggestion".<sup>204</sup>

There is no specific room available for copying because every room could be used for that purpose. The architect explains that the collection is too small to remove paintings for copying. However it was considered that the students should be able to study in the gallery for two days, when the gallery is not open to the public (which it would be for four days). In a large gallery such as the Pinacotheca in Munich, it is appropriate to have fifty paintings out of 1, 600 in a special room for the purposes of copying. The architect knows this particular building through engravings but does not approve of the way it has been organised. He would not have arranged the National Gallery in different compartments that would display different schools. He designed the national Gallery to have "...a division into two schools in each room".<sup>205</sup> This

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<sup>203</sup> SC36 q. 1420, p. 124.

<sup>204</sup> SC36 q. 1430, p. 125.

<sup>205</sup> SC36 q. 1435, p. 125.



arrangement is so that a student can "...compare a Venetian with a Roman picture, so as to see at once the excellencies of both, and wherein they differ, and enable the student to appreciate, by contrast, the drawing of the one and the colouring of the other".<sup>206</sup> Thus Wilkins has designed the gallery so that you can consider two different schools, while they are placed far enough away from each other to be distinctly identified.

**8 July 1836 Mr. William Segulier (in addition to Mr. Wilkins), qq. 1439-1680, pp. 126-136**

Mr. Segulier is the keeper of the National Gallery established in 1824 (104, Pall Mall) and can be called on at any time to give his opinion about purchases, to take charge of the collection, admit students, and generally to superintend the gallery. He was appointed by the Treasury and is responsible to the Trustees of the National Gallery who number sixteen in total, including Lord Grey, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Goderich, Lord Farnborough, Sir James Graham, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Ridley-Colborne, Mr. Spring-Rice and Sir Martin Archer Shee. Every half year Mr. Segulier produces a written report for the Trustees. The witness is asked how much the Trustees and he are involved with the actual collection. He notes that "[w]e have occasionally meetings; they meet at the gallery, and the trustees of the British Museum come every year to see that those pictures which are left in their hands are taken care of: those inspected by the trustees of the British Museum".<sup>207</sup>

Dr. Bowring asks the witness how the Trustees were chosen, and whether it was due to their political status. The witness says it was, but urges the Committee to understand that these are "...men of science" and that many are very competent judges, particularly Lord Lansdowne. Yes, the Trustees are very busy with their political duties, such as the Prime Minister, but that there are other Trustees who

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<sup>206</sup> SC36 q. 1436, pp. 125-6.

do not have these duties, such as Mr. Rogers. The witness explains that there is always good attendance of eight or ten of the Trustees (meetings may be 10 or 12 a year), though the quorum is three.

Mr. Seguiet is also the keeper of the King's pictures and he superintends the British Institution that does not take much of his time. None of these other duties interferes with his duties of the National Gallery.

The management of the National Gallery rests with the Trustees but the witness does not know whether the Committee must report to the Treasury, he assumes they do. He is asked to explain how the meetings between himself and the Trustees progress and Mr. Seguiet explains that they go through the minutes of the last meeting, then the group goes through the letters received regarding offers of pictures, and the Trustees may have letters to present on the subject also. They do not discuss the state of the gallery officially, because they have the meetings in the building and go around it before the meeting.

Financially Mr. Seguiet who submits accounts to the Treasury every half year manages the gallery. He then applies for the expenses, of about £1, 000 a year for each expense, such as taxes, salaries and every thing else. However purchases of paintings are handled by the Trustees who apply separately to the Treasury. There is no definite plan for collecting old masters. However, since Mr. Seguiet has been in office there have been proposals for the purchase of Italian paintings: two Corregios from Lord Londonderry, but others were not considered right to purchase. However there has been no recent purchases, there have been few proposals recently, except two Gainsborough's. There have been no offers of Italian pictures.

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<sup>207</sup> SC36 q. 1452, p. 126.



Mr. Seguiet considers himself capable of continuing a collection of Italian paintings because, although he has never been to the country personally, he has seen the Italian pictures in the country. He also considers that several of the trustees are capable of selecting and excluding Italian paintings for a national collection.

Mr. Ewart asks whether the witness considers it important that the national collection is made up of original paintings, to which the witness agrees. The chairman then goes on to ask Mr. Seguiet about several paintings and what status they are. In the witness's opinion 'The Mill' by Claude is an original, while he considers, 'Christ in the Garden' by Corregio to be a copy. However 'The Holy Family' by A. Del Sarto, he believes is genuine. He does not however think it is one of the artist's best works. The finest specimens of A. Del Sarto are in Florence but, although the witness has never been there, he has seen 7 of the finest paintings in the collection of Lord Cowper, whose father collected them from Florence. There are two Italian paintings (a Salvator Rosa and a Parmegiano) that are being offered for sale by Mr. Byng (the Member for Parliament representing Middlesex).

It is very desirable that the collection of paintings should be active and vigilant and that the national collection should be made up of paintings that may not be appropriate for individuals to collect. As far as Mr. Seguiet knows, there is no regular official contact made with the Continent with regard to seeking out appropriate paintings for collection. However the witness considers that the Trustees have enough contacts in the right circles to know whether a painting was up for sale. The national collection is bequeathed many paintings, some are not of excellent quality, and Mr. Seguiet agrees with Mr. Ewart that it would be appropriate to encourage people to bequeath money as well as paintings.

Aside from the Trustees, Mr. Seguiet considers that the most experienced persons to buy and trade in paintings in the country, are Mr. Woodburn, Mr. Stanley and Mr. Emmerson. It was the Trustees who advised on buying the paintings of the Marquis of Londonderry. Mr. Seguiet sometimes negotiates on the purchase of paintings, if called on to do so. The purchase of the three Murillos, from Marshal Soult is under negotiation at present, but the witness does not consider that paintings of this sort should take preference over work of the Roman and Florentine schools. The witness explains that he would rather have one. Raphael than three Murillo's. He is asked about the paintings being exhibited at the British Institution at present and Seguiet explains that the Murillos owned by the Duke of Sutherland are very fine.

Mr. Ewart then asks Mr. Seguiet what state the paintings that are in the national collection are in. The witness explains that they are generally in a good condition and only a few have been cleaned. The chairman asks him what the condition of the 'Sebastian del Piombo' is in. Seguiet explains that this particular painting has worm, but no other insects affecting the edge of it. In opposition to this, Ewart reads a section of a letter (he received on 7 July) in which the correspondent is rather alarmed by the state of that particular painting. Seguiet concedes that there may be damage caused by an insect, as well as a worm, but that the effects are still restricted to the edge of the painting. The witness explains though that because he would have to shut off the entire room to the public, he was not going to treat the painting until the paintings were moved to the new National Gallery. Mr. Wilkins explains that he envisages that the building will be fit to receive paintings by Christmas. Mr. Seguiet is asked why he does not give the particular painting treatment in the second week in September when the national collection is closed to the public.

Mr. Ewart then asks about the problems with identification and public reception of paintings, such as of the Italian masters, that are affected by dirt and varnish.



However Mr. Seguiet is not convinced that a public will not be able to appreciate such paintings and would not be able to appreciate such paintings and would prefer gaudy pictures. Furthermore, he notes, it is dangerous to the paintings to attempt to remove varnish or dirt.

The chairman then asks the witness about the basis on which he would base a national collection. He asks

[i]s it not very desirable to form a national collection, not through the mere intentionality of connoisseurship, but by an historical investigation whether the pictures are the works of the men to whom they are attributed, and have been handed down as such since their original first painting.<sup>208</sup>

Mr. Seguiet considers that it is important that as much historical evidence of originality should be gleaned, however that this is not guarantee that a painting is actually an original. The witness agrees that it is important for a selector of paintings of paintings to have more than one area of expertise.

The witness is asked about the large picture by West and the 'Holy Family' by Sir Joshua. He considers that the West is as good as any of the painter's works and that the Reynolds is in as good a condition as any of his paintings. This latter work was bought by Mr. Seguiet (under the guidance of the Trustees) last Christmas.

Mr. Ewart then asks the witness whether he has considered the way in which a gallery should be formed and he says that he has. He has experience of galleries in Flanders, Holland and France, but he has never been to the Pinacothek in Munich. Because he does not know it Mr. Ewart explains three of the most successful features of it, in his opinion. He explains that there is a long corridor "...from which you can branch off into any school, without going through the intermediate

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<sup>208</sup> SC36 q. 1567, p. 131.

schools, by which the eye of the visiter [sic.] may at once take in a first impression, without being disturbed by seeing any other school”.<sup>209</sup> He notes that there are also larger and smaller rooms designed to accommodate larger paintings and paintings that are “...mere cabinet pictures”.<sup>210</sup> He also notes that there is a specific copy room designed for students so that they do not disturb visitors. To all these arrangements the witness responds positively, but he does not think they are all applicable to the organisation of the National Gallery because of the size of the collection. Ewart asks:

[h]ave you ever turned your attention to what I called before, the collocation of pictures, their arrangement in schools, and their division so as to make them as much historical as possible, connecting the masters with their pupils, and giving an instructive as well as an interesting view to the public of the pictures before them?<sup>211</sup>

Again this is difficult, explains the witness because of the limited size of the collection. The chairman explains that this is the way the Louvre is organised but Mr. Segquier does not consider there is room for such treatment in the National Gallery in London.

It would seem that “...no provision in the plan of the National Gallery for historical arrangement of pictures according to schools, and for making a distinction between the great schools of Italy and the different national schools” was made, suggests Mr. Ewart, and Mr. Segquier considers that there was not the room for this sort of discussion.<sup>212</sup> Thus Mr. Ewart tries to conclude “[t]hen is this building (which ought to be on a great and comprehensive plan, to be an eternal monument of the arts in this country,) to be merely a gallery where pictures are to be placed without due distribution, and not a gallery worthy of this nation”?<sup>213</sup> Mr. Wilkins explains that there was some thought regarding the

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<sup>209</sup> SC36 q. 1590, p. 132.

<sup>210</sup> SC36 q. 1591, p. 132.

<sup>211</sup> SC36 q. 1594, p. 132.

<sup>212</sup> SC36 q. 1600, p. 133.

<sup>213</sup> SC36 q. 1602, p. 133.



arrangement, although the land available for the gallery was limited. Mr. Seguiet is asked how the paintings would be hung and he explains that in the case of large paintings, they would appear on their own, but with smaller paintings, they would be positioned in two rows, one above the other.

The chairman asks

[h]ave you ever contemplated the best means of communicating to the public, who are supposed to visit these pictures, the readiest information respecting the masters who produced the pictures, the school they belonged to, the time at which the master lived and died, and such brief explanation as may at once give the most compendious instruction to the public?<sup>214</sup>

But the witness does not know how that kind of information could be given unless there were people present to give the information or through a catalogue. Mr. Ewart suggests that there might be labels throughout the gallery explaining various details of the origin of the paintings, such as "...the name of the master, and the time at which he lived and died, and the school he belonged to...".<sup>215</sup> The witness considers that this would be a good plan. Mr. Ewart explains that

...in the Berlin gallery, in each of the compartments, there is a map explanatory of the compartment, and that by consulting the map a person is able, immediately, to get a certain portion of historical information relative to the pictures, and to be instructed without reference to a catalogue in a very easy manner?<sup>216</sup>

Mr. Seguiet considers these are all interesting suggestions but does not think it essential, but only desirable, that the various techniques of arranging collections in Munich, Paris, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin and Petersburg, should be examined to discover the best way of arranging a presenting a national collection.

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<sup>214</sup> SC36 q. 1607, p. 133.

<sup>215</sup> SC36 q. 1610, p. 133.

<sup>216</sup> SC36 q. 1613, p. 133.

There are one hundred and twenty-six paintings in the National Gallery, but Mr. Seguiet is unable to identify how inferior or superior the collection is compared to Continental galleries. The witness considers that the whole collection is worth between £140, 000 and £150, 000, and that the original collection acquired from Mr. Angerstein was bought for about £57, 000.

Mr. Seguiet does not consider that it would be advisable for the cartoons presently at Hampton Court to be taken to the National Gallery. They are watercolours, and although it would be desirable that the British public school should see them, he believes in twenty years, the smoke in London's atmosphere would destroy the work. He is not sure whether glass placed on the front of them would necessarily prevent this.

He does consider that there should be a British national gallery, which Mr. Ewart suggests should be made up of "...paintings which have been selected on the principle of competition before judges of admitted capability to decide, and then purchased for the nation, and placed in a separate school as the English school".<sup>217</sup> Mr. Seguiet agrees with this, but is not prepared to answer a question as to whether he considers the National Gallery and the Royal Academy should share the same premises. Mr. Brotherton asks how many people visit the National Gallery at present and the witness explains there are about 130, 000. Artists are permitted (free of charge) to study at the gallery but they must get written permission from himself. He understands that there is a charge to study the work in the royal palaces. There are catalogues for sale at the National Gallery and they are sold as cheaply as possible for sixpence (they cost five pence to produce), the profit goes to the upkeep of the building. To his knowledge, no individuals have contributed money to the National Gallery, only paintings. The National Gallery is open every day, for the first four days of the week, it is open to the public, and the other two days it is open to the students.

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<sup>217</sup> SC36 q. 1626, p. 134.



Mr. Hope asks about the construction of the National Gallery and whether it is adaptable for any collection. A discussion then ensues regarding the relative heights of walls and sizes of pictures in the collection and in the royal palaces. It seems that only paintings of a certain size can be catered for in the new National Gallery, this means that paintings such as those of the Venetian School may not be accommodated. Mr. Wilkins claims that the building was constructed with the present collection in mind. Mr. Segulier also noted that there are at present six pictures from the King, five of them are large and cannot be hung because of their size, however the witness was not consulted about the construction of the new building.

Dr. Bowring asks the witness about a portrait by Gainsborough that belonged to Mr. Schonberg and was given to the National Gallery. However, the elder Mr. Schonberg (his eldest brother) claimed the property of the painting and has asked his Trustees for the picture back. The Trustees have decided to give the painting back to the family, even though it has been in the National Gallery for twelve months.

Mr. Ewart returns to the issue that Mr. Wilkins in designing the building did not consult the keeper of the National Gallery collection. This is evident because although the architect planned the great hall for displaying large paintings, a picture such as Paolo Veronese's in the Louvre could not be accommodated. However there is a room that could but that is the gallery intended for sculpture which is actually part of the Royal Academy quarters.

Mr. Ewart finishes the questioning by asking whether Mr. Segulier thinks it is appropriate to have a room specifically for copying. He does because it means that neither the public, nor the students, would obstruct each other.

**8 July 1836 Mr. Samuel Woodburn qq. 1681-1760, pp. 136-141**

Mr. Woodburn and his two brothers are professional picture dealers, they are proprietors of a collection of drawings originally made by Sir Thomas Lawrence "...as the original designs of the great masters".<sup>218</sup> Because of this work, they have travelled all over the Continent. Mr. Woodburn himself has been to Italy twice and his brothers have been to Spain and Petersburg. As a group, they know the collections of Germany, Stockholm and Copenhagen well.

As far as organisation and the best regulation, the witness considers the Louvre to a very successful. However in terms of quality of collections (and state of pictures), the collection in Madrid, from all the royal palaces, and now at the Prado palace is perhaps the finest. These have lost none of their original colouring and perhaps it is due to the climate that has remained so true. The Madrid collection has three of the best Raphael's, including 'Madonna with the fish', it also has two Corregios.

There are also some very good collections in Italy, particularly that of the Grand Duke in Florence, the Pope's collection, which includes 'The Transfiguration' by Raphael, and the Duchy of Parma's is also a fine collection, though small.

In terms of management and placement of paintings, the witness considers the Louvre to be a fine example, but he has not been to Germany (his brother has though). He imagines that the new buildings of the Kings of Prussia and Bavaria are no doubt very fine, particularly that of Bavaria (at Dresden the pictures are placed too high).

The French system of management is as follows:

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<sup>218</sup> SC q. 1684, p. 136.



...they have what they call a *custode*; the chief man or person of honour is the Count Forbin: he is at the head of the museum, and under him he has a certain number of subordinate officers, and they have four or five of what they call *experts*, who are judges of pictures, who have to recommend. Any picture that is offered is submitted to them, and they give their opinion of its merits, which is not always conclusive; the affair is very much in the hands of Count Forbin.<sup>219</sup>

The experts are generally professionals who deal in pictures, they receive a small salary and send in their judgment to Court Forbin in writing. There may be four or more. Artists are also consulted in Paris, as well as other parts of the Continent. Not wanting to be drawn on this system as opposed to the English system, the witness explains that he considers the present committee to be an excellent group of patrons who should head any institution. However he feels that they have too much other work to do and would not have time to concentrate on "...the minutiae".<sup>220</sup> He considers that there should be advice given when there are difficult questions about offers and purchases. The Dutch school is "...easy to judge of at once", "...but when we come to Italian pictures it requires a very long study".<sup>221</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks what sort of gallery arrangement Mr. Woodburn would recommend. He explains that although he has never been to the gallery of the King of Bavaria, he thought that the description of this arrangement seemed very desirable. The chairman asks the witness five times<sup>222</sup> whether the design of the new National Gallery should have been informed by a study of the arrangement of other galleries in Europe. The witness clearly avoids answering the rather difficult question (particularly with the architect of the gallery present). He explains that the British collection is in its infancy and the building reflects that. However the recent purchase of Mr. Angerstein's pictures were a "...very

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<sup>219</sup> SC36 q. 1697, p. 137.

<sup>220</sup> SC36 q. 1702, p. 137.

<sup>221</sup> SC36 q. 1702, p. 137.

<sup>222</sup> SC qq. 1705-1709, p. 138.

important acquisition".<sup>223</sup> Then Mr. Woodburn suggests that the architect was restricted by the size of the site and then by the public outcry regarding the space being occupied. He also suggests that when the plan was first considered the public interest in art was not as strong as it is now. Mr. Woodburn then explains that he himself had a plan for a gallery, which he mentioned to the late Sir Thomas Lawrence

...at the time they began to rebuild the palace where Buckingham House stood, which was to have pulled down St. James's Palace, and rebuild the two palaces, united them by a gallery run across the Green Park with arches for carriages to go underneath, and he laughed very much at my idea; but I think that plan would have been fully equal to the Louvre, and I do not think it would have cost much more money than has been spend in the new palace.<sup>224</sup>

Mr. Ewart then changes the subject. He asks whether the selection of paintings to purchase for the National Gallery in Germany is the same as in France. This is something that the witness does not know, but he does know the details of purchase policy in the Hague, where they have two or three connoisseurs to buy for the collection. He is also asked about copying facilities and Mr. Woodburn notes that in the Hague gallery, students can request (and pay a small fee) for the removal of a painting from the main rooms, which is then hung in a special room for the purposes of copying. To Mr. Wilkins, the chairman asks what provision there is for copying in the new building. The architect explains that there is no specific room because the plan was that the pictures would be copied on certain days in the week.

Generally, the witness is in favour of a gallery organised in schools but does not consider that the British national collection is large enough for this type of organisation. The best way of conveying information is in a catalogue raisonné, according to Mr. Woodburn. He notes that the Louvre catalogues are a very good

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<sup>223</sup> SC36 q. 1705, p. 138.

<sup>224</sup> SC36 q. 1709, p. 138.



example of this, as they give the name, birth and death of the artist, as well as some details about the painter. The sculpture catalogue is particularly useful and done by Mr. Visconti, "...a very scientific man".<sup>225</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks whether the pictures in the National Gallery are all originals. Mr. Woodburn explains that it is very rare that all paintings are originals and as Mr. Seguiet is aware, the Michel Angelo 'The Dream' and the Corregio are doubtful, but he considers the Claude is genuine, though not a good example. The witness is not sure that it is useful to be completely candid about originality, he explains that "[t]here are such a variety of opinions about pictures, that the truth cannot be always spoken".<sup>226</sup> The chairman asks whether it is desirable that paintings should be able to be traced back to the hands of the painter or the original painter. Mr. Woodburn comments that "...[w]ith regard to historically traced, I think it is always a very good secondary consideration: but a picture may be historically traced, and yet discovered to be, although once a very fine one, yet so damaged as not to be worth 10 l....".<sup>227</sup> He goes on to suggest that

...a picture of very high reputation may, through a singular circumstance, get into private hands, and be lost sight of. It is always satisfactory to have a good pedigree; and if there was no information nor no knowledge in art at all in this country, it would then be the only landmark to go by.<sup>228</sup>

He does not think this process is the best guarantee of originality "...a person must know very little about pictures that could not go into a picture gallery, and say, that was painted by so and so, without a catalogue. I think there are a great many people who could name half the pictures off-hand, without tradition".<sup>229</sup>

There are many collections that were thought to be good but have turned out to be made up of fake paintings copied for English visitors to the Continent in the

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<sup>225</sup> SC36 q. 1723, p. 139.

<sup>226</sup> SC36 q. 1734, pp. 139-140.

<sup>227</sup> SC36 q. 1737, p. 140.

<sup>228</sup> SC36 q. 1738, p. 140.

last century. It was only until the purchase of the Orleans gallery, that he notes “I consider the purchase of the Orleans gallery, the different collections that formerly enjoyed a very high reputation were but indifferent”.<sup>230</sup> Since that time he considers that there has been a lot more knowledge about art generally, amongst the public.

The witness considers that it would be a very good thing if the cartoons from Hampton Court were brought to the National Gallery, and Mr. Woodburn considers that if the preparations are careful, there should be no damage done to the watercolours.

On the subject of the ‘Sebastian del Piombo’ in the National Gallery, the witness did not know that the painting had worm but suggests that when paintings are put on canvas, when they had been on board, the extra paste needed attract the worm. He explains that this can be easily remedied with wax and turpentine but he considers that, for a collector, it is desirable to have the painting on its original board. Some of the Raphaels in Paris have been very affected by being put onto canvas.

Mr. Woodburn considers that if there were enough pictures to fill the National Gallery, then there would not be enough room for the Royal Academy, but since there are not then the gallery is well used for that society.

The witness is then asked a series of questions about the provision for the lower classes in society. Mr. Woodburn explains that he does not think there is enough “...rational amusement” for the “...lower orders of people”.<sup>231</sup> He goes on

I was always of opinion there is not sufficient amusement for the lower order of people, which drive them to the gin shop, and I was very much

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<sup>229</sup> SC36 q. 1739, p. 140.

<sup>230</sup> SC36 q. 1740, p. 140.

<sup>231</sup> SC36 q. 1750, p. 141.



pleased in going through the Regent's Park to see a portion of that thrown open, and a number of people playing about in an afternoon; I think if there was more of that sort of recreation for the lower orders it would be very desirable.<sup>232</sup>

However the witness considers that generally speaking there is a sense that the labouring classes are "...below the same class in other nations...".<sup>233</sup> Generally the witness believes that any pursuit whether parks, galleries of art or public libraries, even if open on a Sunday (a religious day) would not have an adverse effect. Rather the only result is in turning the lower orders from "...vicious pursuits".<sup>234</sup> In Paris he was "...very glad to see soldiers and people with their wooden shoes"<sup>235</sup> in the gallery but he has noticed "...more exclusion in other places".<sup>236</sup> These pursuits are somehow more suited to the French, explains Mr. Woodburn who thinks that "...the French rather a more fickle people than us, I think; if a Frenchman can earn enough in three days to last him six, he will only work three days, and will amuse himself these rest".<sup>237</sup> Mr. Brotherton suggests that this is due to the observation of more Saints' days in the country, but the witness does not know about that. The witness has nothing more to add but would be happy to assist in any way in the future.

**8 July 1836 Mr. George Stanley qq. 1761-1799, pp. 141-144**

Mr. Stanley is an auctioneer of pictures in London and he has travelled in France, Holland, Germany and Munich. He was in Munich before they built the latest gallery, has never been to Berlin, and as far as he is concerned, the Louvre is the best national gallery he has seen.

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<sup>232</sup> SC36 q. 1751, p. 141.

<sup>233</sup> SC36 q. 1752, p. 141.

<sup>234</sup> SC36 q. 1755, p. 141.

<sup>235</sup> SC36 q. 1756, p. 141.

<sup>236</sup> SC36 q. 1757, p. 141.

<sup>237</sup> SC36 q. 1758, p. 141.

He has given a lot of thought to the idea of a national gallery and wonders how valuable such an institution is. His doubts are not based on the idea of seeing beautiful paintings, but more on the fact that students copy paintings although “[t]hey are not obliged to do it, but their own idleness and the desire to make pictures would induce them to do so”.<sup>238</sup> Thus the art produced develops into mannerism. The witness explains

I am referring to the opening of galleries, such as the national galleries at the Hague and the Louvre, where persons are sent to copy, because I am fully aware that instead of producing original artists, they would produce a host of imitators that would rather derogate the art than advance it.<sup>239</sup>

Mr. Stanley considers that the best way of arranging paintings is in schools, and chronologically so that visitors can compare schools. But he does not consider it necessary to give an audience more details than simply the name of the painter and perhaps the date. This seems to surprise Mr. Ewart who asks the witness again and again whether it is surely better to have details on a frame so that “...those... persons which we wish to enlighten” would not have to look up information in a catalogue, or by using a map (as in Berlin) and it would also be cheaper.<sup>240</sup> Mr. Stanley concedes that the “lower orders” would probably prefer to keep their sixpence rather than spend it on a catalogue, but considers that there must be some effort made by the observer to find out information for him or herself.

The witness is then asked whether a national gallery have ‘native’ pictures in it and he considers that it should, but they should be distinct from the old masters. He then presents some prepared thought on patronage, as follows:

[i]n considering the question, I do not think there ought to be a place for the reception of pictures of native artists, or else I do not know for what

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<sup>238</sup> SC36 q. 1772, p. 142.

<sup>239</sup> SC36 q. 1771, p. 142.

<sup>240</sup> SC36 q. 1791, p. 143.



purpose we are going to have a national gallery; these are my words: a national gallery, to be what the name imports, should certainly not be destitute of pictures by native artists. The great end, as I apprehend, of a national gallery should be, to stimulate native genius or talent: it is true, that by enlightening the public mind as regards works of art, artists are compelled to exert themselves to satisfy those so enlightened; but is an artist always sure of his reward when he has devoted his talents to the production of a work in which he has endeavoured to introduce, and perhaps has succeeded in embodying all the excellencies that he has found in old masters? To whom is he to look for patronage, for reward, for encouragement? The nation, by erecting a gallery, has stimulated him to exertion, it holds out certain examples; it seems to invite to a contest for superiority, it would boast of its fostering genius: will it suffer the excited genius to be disheartened by neglect, and to starve while exerting itself under that excitement? Individual painters certainly receive full remuneration for their works, but these are such as paint what are called cabinet pictures and popular subjects, and who need no national gallery to instruct to patronize them. The productions of Wilkie, Landseer, Calcott, Turner, Mulready, Collins, Stanfield, and numerous others, never want purchasers, the only difficulty is to obtain their works even at prices beyond any the old masters ever received; and the painters of portraits and those who exercise their talents in water colours, never fail to employment; those, however, of the higher grade in the art, who are capable of the nobler flights of genius in poetical and historical compositions, are cramped in their energies for want of that proper encouragement that would induce them to put forth their powers and show that they are capable of competing with the renowned masters of other times and other countries; this want of encouragement does not arise from their productions not being appreciated by the discerning part of the public, but from the contracted size of private residences which will not admit of art pictures, such as these artists must execute to display their powers.<sup>241</sup>

Generally Mr. Stanley has no other points to make. However when asked whether the Royal Academy and the National gallery should share a building, he is strongly against this. He does think that galleries should be open on a Sunday and does not consider that this action would produce anything but "...a good moral effect".<sup>242</sup>

**12 July 1836 Mr. John Peel qq. 1800-1823, pp. 144-145**

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<sup>241</sup> SC36 q. 1792, pp. 143-144.

<sup>242</sup> SC36 q. 1799, p. 144.

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Pusey, Brotherton, Hope and Strutt.**

Mr. John peel is a picture restorer and liner. Last week he went to the National Gallery and was shocked by the state of the paintings. He notes that the 'Sebastian del Piombo' is particularly in need of treatment because it is suffering from two types of worm (in the wood and the paste). He also considers that many of the paintings need cleaning as, at present, they are being viewed under yellowing varnish, which is like seeing colours under smoky glass. He considers that this cleaning would in no way "interfere at all with the originality of the picture; would there be no sacrifice of genuineness to procure that greater degree of effect", which is what Mr. Ewart fears about any treatment.<sup>243</sup>

There are several paintings that the witness considers should be relined and particularly 'The Market Cart' by Gainsborough, which is cracking. Mr. Peel notes that although no National Galleries from the Continent have sent painters to Britain to be relined, many picture dealers have, because Britain is considered to have one of the best trades in picture restoration.

**12 July 1836 Mr. Edward Solly qq. 1824-1881, pp. 146-150**

Mr. Solly is a collector of pictures and has been collecting (particularly the Italian School, the period of Raphael of which he is an expert, but from the outset of the Italian School, to Curacci) for the Committee of Berlin Museum. He had travelled abroad, and knows the Louvre and Dresden mainly, but has collected from Italy using agents who have authenticated documentation that the paintings have come from churches and academies in Italy.

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<sup>243</sup> SC36 q. 1817, p. 145.



On the Committee in Berlin, there are professional artists, trustees and also men who, though not artists themselves, have made the study of art their lives. One man of the Berlin Committee for example is a "...person who has the cleaning of the collection".<sup>244</sup> Thus the committee is made up of experts. This differs from the Committee of the National Gallery who are "...gentlemen of taste..." but the witness does not know whether "...they are gentlemen possessing the knowledge which it appears to me is requisite to be good judges of the ancient masters, and to point out what pictures would be desirable for a national gallery".<sup>245</sup> Also he imagines that they were chosen "...because they are most of them possessors of small collections...".<sup>246</sup> The witness considers that "...there is a very great difference..." between understanding private and public collection, "...it is as different as the knowledge of the pretty Dutch pictures and of the grander style of the ancient Italian painters; both as to the subject, composition and style of painting, and every thing connected with it".<sup>247</sup> Thus a private collector's knowledge tends to be with what is fashionable, or is very specialised, and Mr. Solly considers this is the problem with the Committee for the National Gallery. He believes they are not properly aware of the range of history, to make a specific plan. He continues "...[i]f it is to be a complete historical collection...".<sup>248</sup> Mr. Solly considers that the key period for collecting should be 1510-1530, with artists like Gandenzio Ferrari and Bernardino Lucini. The witness notes that we have one painting by Luini, called 'Lionardo' in the collection, but

...we have not in this country any fine gallery specimens by this master; Cesari de Sesto of the same school, and Salaino; these are all painters who flourished about the period of 1520, and these are merely of one particular school, that of Milan; so I might enumerate of all the different towns in Italy; thus in the south of Italy there was Andrea de Salerno, the Raphael of Naples, and who was a contemporary with him. There are painters of

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<sup>244</sup> SC36 q. 1833, p. 146.

<sup>245</sup> SC36 q. 1835, p. 146.

<sup>246</sup> SC36 q. 1836, p. 146.

<sup>247</sup> SC36 q. 1837, pp. 146-147.

<sup>248</sup> SC36 q. 1841, p. 147.

Bergamo of that period, painters of Brescia, Padua, Verona, Treviso, &c.; I might enumerate a number of towns in the different parts of Italy, in which there lived a number of painters of that period whose works are all of them extremely fine, and would be very desirable acquisitions for a national gallery.<sup>249</sup>

Many people agree with him, including Dr. Waagen.

Mr. Solly generally thinks that the National Gallery collection, though it has some good paintings<sup>250</sup> is only the beginning of a collection. It is important that the public are aware of the status of a national collection, and that they are not misled by it. The witness, asked by Mr. Pusey, agrees that it is important that a comprehensive plan should be made for collection. Mr. Solly also agrees that "...the greater variety of the different styles of different periods and different schools will go a great way to correct mannerism".<sup>251</sup> Mr. Pusey asks

[t]he artists to whom you have referred, who were contemporaneous with Raphael, painted in a purer and more manly style than many of those who are better known in this country, I allude particularly to some of the Bolognese school, and whose pictures fetch a higher price"<sup>252</sup>

to which Mr. Solly agrees. He then asks "[i]s it your opinion the study of these earlier masters is likely to lead to a purer style on the part of our own painters than of the later and more effeminate school",<sup>253</sup> to which the witness also agrees.

Mr. Ewart asks about the originality of the pictures in the National Gallery. Mr. Solly considers that 'The Mill' by Claude is a fake, and that "...it is cold and crude, and inferior in the colouring and in the painting; it does not bespeak the

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<sup>249</sup> SC36 q. 1845, p. 147.

<sup>250</sup> Sebastian del Piombo, 'Transfiguration' – Raphael, and the picture by Parmeggio.

<sup>251</sup> SC36 q. 1853, p. 148.

<sup>252</sup> SC36 q. 1854, p. 148.

<sup>253</sup> SC36 q. 1855, p. 148.



hand of the master”.<sup>254</sup> He also thinks that the picture called ‘Andrea del Sarto’ is not as it is “...incorrect in design”.<sup>255</sup> He also complains that there was an opportunity to buy a genuine work by this painter that was of the finest quality, but the National Gallery Committee did not take this up. However Dr. Waagen bought the painting for the Berlin museum.

Mr. Solly does agree with Mr. Peel’s evidence but considers that cleaning should be very carefully attempted as the Sir Joshua Reynolds paintings of ‘The Holy Family’ has been faded by being cleaned. However, the ‘Sebastian del Piombo’ “...is evidently so disguised with old varnish, boiled oil and dirt, that the original and genuine colours of the master, particularly in the flesh, are completely obscured”.<sup>256</sup> But the witness does not consider that the pictures of the Venetian School are any more or less susceptible to bad cleaning, than any other period of painting.

Mr. Solly also considers that Mr. Peel’s evidence about the infestation in the ‘Sebastian del Piombo’ is correct. He was given two of the small beetles from the painting last year by a foreign professor. Mr. Ewart then asks George Rennie (who appears to be present) whether he too can confirm this evidence. He went to the National Gallery last Thursday after heaving about the state of the painting and the under-keeper gave him one of the insects (the coleopterous genus) which is destroying the picture, and has been for the last nine years.

Mr. Pusey asks Mr. Solly about the various collections in Europe. Berlin has around 700 to 800 paintings, the British collection is about 120, the Munich paintings (which are to be put in historical order but have not yet been) are about 7, 000, the collections of the Louvre or Dresden the witness is unsure about, but St. Petersburg has about 4, 000. The Prussian Government began collecting in

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<sup>254</sup> SC36 q. 1856, p. 148.

<sup>255</sup> SC36 q. 1856, p. 148.

<sup>256</sup> SC36 q. 1858, p. 148.

1822, the Angerstein collection was bought for the British collection in 1823 or 1824.

Mr. Ewart asks whether Mr. Solly thinks that the cartoons of Raphael should be moved from Hampton Court. He does not really consider that there will be any more damage to them than to any other paintings, and he thinks it is very desirable that the cartoons should be in London. Mr. Ewart asks Mr. Haydon (who also appears to be present) if he can think of any reason why they should not be brought to London. Haydon does not. He has noted the ones owned by Mr. Prince Hoare have not been affected in 30 years, and the one at the Foundling Hospital was not in a good condition previously. In fact, Mr. Haydon notes, the cartoons may be safer in London because Sir James Thornhill's pictures have suffered from damp and the fountain at Hampton Court makes the atmosphere damp (and the windows are often open).

**12 July 1836 Mr. James Mathews Leigh qq. 1882-1915, pp. 150-151**

Mr. Mathews Leigh is a professional artist who has been taught by Mr. Jackson, Mr. Etty and Mr. Hersent (of Paris). He has also edited 'The Library of Fine Arts', with other artists. He has travelled abroad and can give an account of the galleries in The Hague, Amsterdam, the Louvre, Madrid, Antwerp, Mannheim and Frankfurt.

The most interesting gallery for a small town is Frankfurt that unites a museum and an academy. The permanent collection was bequeathed by the banker Städel and has been added to by donations. There is also a gallery for modern painters of the Society for Encouragement of Living Artists. The work of this society is bought by the members and disposed by raffle among them. The museum is not perhaps ideal for a National Gallery however. The Madrid Gallery has an arrangement that demands that one must pass through one gallery to another,



which the witness does not approve of. The Louvre has a magnificent collection though the arrangement is not very good because one has to walk through the whole gallery before getting to the Italian Gallery which has the best collection.

The ideal arrangement as far as the witness is concerned is a plan where a central vestibule or hall allows access to different galleries, without having to walk from one to the other. He understands that this is the arrangement of the Munich Gallery, but has never been there. The Louvre only has one room properly lit (and this is for the Italian Gallery). The witness explains that in his opinion the National Gallery in London is not designed with reference to any other National Gallery, and considers that the rooms are too square.

With regard to the arrangement of paintings, Mr. Mathews Leigh considers there are only two processes, by date and by schools. He does not consider that there should be modern and ancient pictures placed together unless the ancient pictures have been restored to their original tone. However the witness explains that the British National collection is only the beginning.

The National Gallery building is restricted because of the area it was constructed in, and it is possibly only the appropriate for the present collection, rather than a truly national collection. The witness does not consider that there is room enough for the Royal Academy and the National Gallery, and thought that the decision had been made to call off the plan. Mr. Mathews Leigh does consider that a room devoted to the early English School would be a good idea but for modern British art, this is not perhaps the best venue, although there are some modern paintings of the best quality. A gallery of this work would encourage artists.

The witness believes that galleries open on Sundays (as long as they are closed during the services) have

...a most beneficial effect...the people after going to the gallery of the Louvre on a Sunday, will go and take a quiet walk in the Champs Elysées (instead of going to a cabaret), and talk the merits of the pictures over; Sunday, unfortunately, is the only day the Louvre is open to the French people.<sup>257</sup>

However it is not good that Sunday is the only day that is open to the French people to visit the Louvre. Mr. Mathews Leigh thinks that the National Gallery should be open four days a week, with Friday and Saturday devoted to artists. However, there should not be a copying room because paintings should not be moved. In Amsterdam the pictures are hung on hinges so that they can be moved to the light, but this is only because they do not have good lighting in the gallery. It is certainly desirable that the gallery should be open early and late as long as it is light in Britain, to provide as much access as possible.

Ultimately Mr. Mathews Leigh considers that Britain is in great need of "...appreciating and desiring instruction", particularly through seeing the "chaster works of the Italian".<sup>258</sup> By which he means the work of the period contemporaneous to or prior to Raphael, as described by Mr. Solly. The witness considers that, as opposed to the Schools of Bologna, "...it is a school whose works we are exceedingly in want of to enable us to correct the tendency of the English style towards weakness of design, effeminacy of composition and flauntiness of colouring".<sup>259</sup>

**15 July 1836 Sir Martin Archer Shee qq. 1916-2042, pp. 152-170**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Hope, Pusey, Brotherton, Hutt and Strutt.**

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<sup>257</sup> SC36 q. 1905, p. 151.

<sup>258</sup> SC36 q. 1912, p. 151.

<sup>259</sup> SC36 q. 1915, p. 151.



Sir Martin Archer Shee is the President of the Royal Academy and he was sent the evidence from the previous witnesses. Mr. Ewart asks him if he has any comments after reading it. He first defends the Royal Academy against the accusation that the academy was derived from "...the *basest intrigue*".<sup>260</sup> This he argues against by reading an account of the formation of the society from Mr. Farrington's *History and Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds* and Mr. Edwards' *Anecdotes of the Arts*. Both these accounts show the artists of the original Royal Academy in a good light, suggesting that the good character and talent of the original directors was being acted against by the inferior majority, forcing the artists to create their own elite institution. The witness reminds the Committee than in accepting these accounts of the formation of the early Royal Academy as a corrupt institution mar the names of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Benjamin West, Sir William Chambers and Paul Sandby, all very respected men, as well as artists (and architect). In response, Mr. Ewart does not consider that this was even in question and asks whether these mens' reputations were slighted. To which the witness said that the previous witnesses would not be "...so indiscreet as to mention names".<sup>261</sup> On what other evidence does the witness want to comment, asks Mr. Ewart? Sir Martin Shee replies that he wishes to argue against the main charge which is that

...the Royal Academy has impeded the progress of the arts, and that their state is now much lower than it was before it was established. Another evidence states that the arts are making such progress, that "let the Royal Academy do what they will", it is impossible for them to stop the progress of improvement.<sup>262</sup>

Firstly the evidence given contradicts itself. The Royal Academy has impeded the arts in one statement yet in another historical painting is in a *higher* state in this country than in France and Germany. Other accusations about the domination of portrait painters and how this "...killed Hussey the painter, and

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<sup>260</sup> SC36 q. 1916, p. 152.

<sup>261</sup> SC36 q. 1918, p. 153.

<sup>262</sup> SC36 q. 1923, p. 153.

embarrassed Hogarth” is incorrect because they were both dead before the Royal Academy was established in 1768.<sup>263</sup>

Sir Martin comments on the ridiculousness of saying that academies are injurious to society.

If I understand what an academy is, it means that; and how such an institution can be injudicious to the interest of society, I cannot well conceive. I can well imagine that a particular academy, by its injudicious construction and by its mal-administration, may be so mismanaged as to convert a great good into a great evil.<sup>264</sup>

As for considering that the Royal Academy is corrupt, then the President of the institution consider that more evidence than has been presented needs to be put forward. He also suggests that it is ridiculous to say that the title of Royal Academy after a name is not necessary or desirable to indicate talent or merit.

That social system might perhaps be the best, wherein wisdom and virtue alone should be the objects which call for the respect and homage of mankind. I should be the last to oppose such a system were it practicable; but, unfortunately, every man does not show his wisdom in his face, nor are his virtues blazoned on his breast; a mark of honour or distinction, therefore, is a stamp set upon merit, for the purpose of pointing it out to those who have no other means of ascertaining it. Whether that is a proper, polite or patriotic institution in society, it is not for me to determine. But I apprehend it is not necessary to go further into that subject.<sup>265</sup>

The witness then addresses the previous evidence regarding the funds of the Royal Academy. He comments that there are equal amounts given to members through pensions and funds, as to artists that are not in the Royal Academy. Furthermore, he notes that the accusation that no funds are given to anyone but the members of the society despite the fact that 600 other artists exhibit, and thus earn the money is false. Sir Martin explains further

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<sup>263</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>264</sup> SC36 q. 1923, p. 154.



[c]onscious that the Royal Academy was not a mere charity fund, that it was appropriated to a higher purpose than the mere maintenance of the distressed, that it had for its objects the promotion of the arts, the cultivation of the public taste, and the improvement of our manufactures, conscious that these were its legitimate objects, and that any money applied to other purposes was in some degree a departure from the original contract of the institution, the members of the academy did not conceive themselves warranted in devoting a larger portion of their funds, to merely benevolent purposes. They have therefore assisted and promoted the establishment of the two societies alluded to.<sup>266</sup>

Generally the witness is keen to portray the society as “...an institution in which the funds are managed with more pure integrity”.<sup>267</sup> Sir Martin outlines the salaries of those working for the Royal Academy. Mr. Hilton, the historical painter is the Keeper of the institution with a salary £160 a year. He also has an apartment at the Royal Academy. The secretary of the Royal Academy has a salary of £140 and an allowance for house, coals and candles. The librarian has £100 a year. There is also the treasurer who is appointed by the King. The present man in that position is Sir Robert Smirke who has a salary of £100. The duties of the treasurer do not completely occupy Sir Robert, and he has no other assistant.

When meeting, the members receive 5 shillings. This was originally intended to cover the cost of travel. It is an amount that cannot really be considered to induce attendance. Visitors to the Academy are allowed a guinea a day and must attend for two to three hours. Funds are also expended on the professors of painting, architecture, perspective and sculpture. Mr. Flaxman was first established as that professor because

[t]he academy was under the impression that it would be useful to sculpture in general if the principles of the art were more clearly

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<sup>265</sup> SC36 q. 1923, p. 154.

<sup>266</sup> SC36 q. 1927, p. 155.

<sup>267</sup> SC36 q. 1928, p. 155.

developed by an able sculptor than they are upon the general principles of the art, as applied to other branches. I therefore took the liberty, on a former occasion, of suggesting to the academy the propriety of establishing a professorship of sculpture.<sup>268</sup>

Mr. Westmacott is the present post-holder. There is also a lecturer on anatomy “...who was appointed from the most eminent men in the profession of surgeons”.<sup>269</sup> The lecturers are expected to deliver six lectures every year and received £60 for them. If they do not give the lectures, they do not get paid.

Mr. Brotherton asks about the academy dinner and Sir Martin explains that the individual artists do not have the power to invite *anyone*, but the committee of the Royal Academy (admittedly still members of the Royal Academy) asks about 140 people which is about the most convenient amount for the size of the apartments. There are guests that have to be invited such as the members of the Royal family and foreign and British dignitaries. Also then men of “...literary and scientific eminence, such as Byron, Walter Scott, Davy, Rogers, Moore, Babbage, and many others”.<sup>270</sup> The Royal Academy does acknowledge men of talent but does have to pay due attention to the “...acknowledged scale and graduation of precedence which is generally adopted in society”.<sup>271</sup> Sir Martin explains that the Royal Academy dinner must be extended to the nobility because “...those persons who must necessarily be the promoters and employers of artists...”.<sup>272</sup> The witness assures the chairman that no Royal Academy invites friends simply because they are friends.

Sir Archer Shee goes on to comment on the questioning of whether there are any good artists in the Royal Academy. He suggests that he would be confident to assert that a great many are of the highest order. Furthermore as to the claim that the Royal Academy has tried to stunt the growth of the highest department of

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<sup>268</sup> SC36 q. 1935, p. 156.

<sup>269</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>270</sup> SC36 q. 1939, pp. 156-157).

<sup>271</sup> SC36 q. 1941, p. 157.



art, that is historical, the witness strongly refutes this. He notes that at the end of the last century, West, Flaxman and Opie attempted to put together a plan for a gallery of the highest form of art, but although this was sanctioned by the Royal Academy “[t]heir zeal so far outstepped their discretion...that they endeavoured to promote that object which it is said to be the interest of the academy, from the corrupt nature of the system, to obstruct and depreciate”.<sup>273</sup>

Sir Martin (though reluctantly) outlines two attempts that he has made in the course of historical painting, despite being a portrait himself. He mentions a plan that he and Mr. Flaxman proposed

...for the purpose of procuring encouragement in the higher departments of the arts, strongly stating that although the academy had used every exertion for the cultivation and education of artists, they had not the means of patronizing them when educated; and that, therefore, something was required to be done by the state.<sup>274</sup>

But because the Royal Academy is patronised by the King, it was thought inappropriate to apply to Government independently so firstly an application, within up by Flaxman, was made to George III, but nothing came of it. Secondly, Archer Shee reveals that as the author of the short essay “The Remonstrance of a Painter” which began as a letter to Sir Thomas Bernard and Sir George Beaumont. This was a practical plan suggesting that the minimum amount of £5, 000 was needed to sustain the arts. The Government was applied for the amount and the British Institution was formed. The witness points out that this plan was alluded to in the previous testimony, but author if it (i.e. himself) was conveniently not mentioned. He also notes the circumstances in which the Royal Academy, (through the actions of two *portrait painters*, Sir Thomas Lawrence and Mr. Philips) bought an important collection of paintings for the British Museum. Mr. Hope points out that this is only proof of an individual’s efforts and not of the

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<sup>272</sup> SC36 q. 1942, p. 157.

<sup>273</sup> SC36 q. 1947, pp. 157-8.

<sup>274</sup> SC36 q. 1948, p. 158.

whole of the Royal Academy. Mr. Pusey asks that surely Archer Shee's presidency of the Royal Academy shows that his actions were approved?

Mr. Ewart asks the witness what he considers are the general effects of academies on art. He explains that as he said before, the general definition of academy is simply school and he thinks schools are generally beneficial. However, the chairman attempts to clarify the questioning:

If I understand you right, you approve of academies when they are simply schools; you disapprove of them when they tend (as has often been attributed to academies) to introduce mannerism and other similar faults, in fact when they fetter the genius of the artist instead of confining themselves to giving instruction?<sup>275</sup>

The witness answers that academies have good and bad effects but that on the whole they are good. But an academy has a great effect on the arts and the witness continues:

I think an academy should be an institution which gives every opportunity to rising talent, which should be open, to all ranks, for admission; which should furnish every means of instruction that the nature of such an institution admits of; and I think it should be the means of conferring honour and dignity on the profession of the arts' for one of the effects of an academy is that it enables an ignorant and uncivilized population to acquire some respect for the arts; it gives them an idea that they are objects of some consequence, and not merely confined in their results to the display of a picture on a wall, or a statue in a square, but they produce a serious influence on the whole scheme and structure of society. By the honours and distinctions which have been connected with the institution of academies, the public are taught to respect the arts and to know their value; for one of the evils of the arts is that their merits do not lie upon the surface.<sup>276</sup>

The witness considers that the Royal Academy answers that description of an academy. He thinks that the institution spreads a knowledge all through the

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<sup>275</sup> SC36 q. 1954, p. 159.

<sup>276</sup> SC36 q. 1956, p. 160.



population. It has educated nearly 1, 800 students and they are not all artists so what has happened to them? Sir Martin considers that the only reasonable conclusion is that they are employed in manufacturers. Mr. Ewart asks for his evidence of this, which the witness does not have. The chairman suggests that the evidence suggests that this is not the case and the Committee has heard of only one instance of a student education at the Royal Academy having employment in education. Mr. Ewart asks whether this is because students are taught who are not really interested or suited to be artists, and because others are taught in such a way as to prevent them from considering more lowly occupation. The witness claims that this is something that cannot be avoided:

[t]here is nothing more constantly within the experience of the artist than the fact that young men who appear to come forward with a flash of talent that dazzles their friends and those who know them, - who appear great geniuses, and who sometimes think themselves great geniuses, - are found, after a few years' application, so completely to retrograde as to exhibit no merit whatever. The only test we can have in the academy with respect to the estimation of a student who applies for admission, is his industry. The student whom we find to apply himself diligently, however dull he may appear, however slow he may be in his operations, may brighten into a man of genius; but there have been so many instances of flashes of talent coming out at an early period, which have been extinguished in smoke, that there is nothing which the academy is so suspicious of as that precocious exhibition of talent.<sup>277</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks whether the witness is familiar with Dr. Waagen's opinion on academies, he said he isn't and when the chairman reads the evidence from the previous witness, Sir Martin explains that he cannot completely agree. He says: "I think gentlemen do not sufficiently distinguish between *concomitants* and cause and effect. It does not at all follow that because Homer and Hesiod were great poets and never went to school, that therefore schools are bad".<sup>278</sup>

Generally, the witness does not agree with Dr. Waagen's evidence that states that academies are only beneficial if they are schools. He claims that academies are

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<sup>277</sup> SC36 q. 1965, pp. 160-161.

<sup>278</sup> SC36 q. 1967, p. 161.

good "...in the same way that universities are good, conferring honours and distinctions, furnishing the means of education, and stimulating the rising race to obtain those honours and distinctions".<sup>279</sup>

The chairman then asks Sir Martin if he is aware of the opinion of Horace Vernet who considers that the French Academy in Rome should be closed. The witness is not aware of this, or of German writers who have been against academies. Mr. Ewart asks whether Archer Shee has read Mons. Say's opinions on academies and their negative affects on the fine arts. The witness explains that he has "...seen it quoted, and have no respect for the opinion of a political economist on the subject of the arts; for the principle of commerce and the principle of art are in direct opposition the one to the other".<sup>280</sup> The chairman asks whether these views should be accepted and the witness claims that

I say generally, as far as I am acquainted with the works of persons who apply the principles of political economy to the fine arts, that they are entirely mistaken in their views. They adapt to the arts a principle which belongs only to trade; and the moment you make art a trade you destroy it.<sup>281</sup>

Mr. Ewart points out that Dr. Waagen is not a political economist, but Archer Shee says that even so, he doesn't agree with the point.

Mr. Ewart asks about the process of election of the Royal Academy but then moves on to the teaching of architecture. The witness does not consider that architecture has been taught effectively but that the Royal Academy has extended all the instruction it has the facilities to do. The architectural casts could not be all displayed and so the collection of Sir Thomas Lawrence (which was bought for £250) was given to the British Museum so that the students could study them there. On another matter Sir Martin explains that visiting teachers are not

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<sup>279</sup> SC36 q. 1969, p. 161.

<sup>280</sup> SC36 q. 1973, p. 162.

<sup>281</sup> SC36 q. 1974, p. 162.



appointed in rotation but are annually elected, and if landscape painters are teaching life drawing, it is because they are capable of doing so. They are appointed by a "...regular assembly of the academy" called on December 10, and is then sanctioned by the King.<sup>282</sup>

Mr. Ewart asks whether Archer Shee considers that "...the half of the National Gallery, which is now to be given up to the Royal Academy, is to be understood as belonging exclusively to the Royal Academy, or as held in trust for the benefit generally of the fine arts".<sup>283</sup> The witness considers that the Royal Academy is a "...trust for the benefit of the fine arts, since they were appointed by the King for the purpose of cultivating and improving the arts of painting and sculpture and architecture",<sup>284</sup> and despite its small number of self-elected members feels it is "...sufficiently comprehensive to watch over and request the general interests of the arts in this country".<sup>285</sup> Sir Martin basically considers that if one does not restrict the membership then "I conceive that all the evils which resulted from the dissensions alluded to in the extracts which I have read to the Committee, would arise from the very nature of the constitution which you have just described; inasmuch as persons necessarily of little skill and knowledge, not having the same means or the same opportunity of acquiring a perfect acquaintance with the claims or talents of artists, would be created for judges".<sup>286</sup>

Archer Shee considers that the present constitution of the Royal Academy is ideal. When the society was established it looked to the future and could not immediately find forty artists of suitable skills, but at present it is possible. "In France 40 members were considered sufficient to represent the literature of 30 millions of men; and I should be proud indeed of my profession if there could be found at any one time 40 artists of such eminence as to be secure of transmitting

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<sup>282</sup> SC36 q. 1983, p. 162.

<sup>283</sup> SC36 q. 1984, p. 162.

<sup>284</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>285</sup> SC36 q. 1986, p. 162, phrase used by William Ewart.

<sup>286</sup> SC36 q. 1988, p. 163.

their names to posterity”.<sup>287</sup> Ultimately the witness infers that if an artist is of the highest quality, he or she will be a member of the Royal Academy.

The Royal Academy does have a law prohibiting members being part of other institutions, explains the witness, but he does not believe the law is necessary as it was established to ensure the maintenance of funds originally. Archer Shee claims that the council only prevented Mr. Cockerell because he asked them directly and they had no choice but to impose the laws. However, he believes that if he had just joined the other institution, no action would have been taken.

Mr. Ewart asks the witness whether he considers it fair that Royal Academicians have the advantage over other painters by arranging the annual exhibition. Sir Martin agrees that they do but that if they do not like the rules of the institution, they do not have to enter the exhibition. Mr. Hope asks whether this idea of advantage is incompatible with the idea of “...a trust for the benefit of art in general” which is how the witness described the Royal Academy previously.<sup>288</sup> In opposition to this suggestion, the witness claims that a society must have some distinction and advantage to encourage high standards in its members and students or associates. Archer Shee considers that it is unavoidable that the members of the society are competitors and judges. Then the witness remembers another point he wishes to address that had been in previous evidence. He notes how ridiculous it is to consider that the public are the best judges of what is good art and that diplomas should not awarded by the Royal Academy. “...[i]t is because the public are ignorant...”.<sup>289</sup> Mr. Pusey tries to get the witness to sum up his approach by asking whether the election of the Royal Academy professors is in the same way as a professorship at a university would be nominated. This, the witness agrees with and suggests that it would be ridiculous to let the public choose a university professor.

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<sup>287</sup> SC36 q. 1989, p. 163.

<sup>288</sup> SC36 q. 2004, p. 164.

<sup>289</sup> SC36 q. 2004, pp. 164-165.



Mr. Hope suggests that one artist should not be able to judge upon another if he is also a competitor but the witness does not feel this can be avoided. But because it cannot be avoided, it doesn't mean that it precludes the academy system altogether. Mr. Hope therefore asks whether the Royal Academy membership could not be extended? The witness thinks not because the quality of the award of 'RA' would be lost.

On the subject of the hanging Committee, Archer Shee suggests that this is not an occasion relished by those selected to do it and only the elected Committee can enter the rooms during the arrangement of the pictures. This opposes the suggestion that all Royal Academicians place their own pictures in the most easy to view positions. Archer Shee claims that he himself has withdrawn two or three of his own paintings to accommodate those by non-Royal Academy members. Other members have done the same including Mr. Leslie. The witness also claims that one year he decided not to exhibit at all for fear of compliments.

Mr. Hope then asks about the claims of Mr. Martin when he said that his painting was badly placed and another one was damaged. The witness regrets that Mr. Martin joined in with providing evidence of the Royal Academy's apparent mistreatment of artists. He claims that the placement of the painter's work, and the success of it is all down to opinion. He suggests that the painter should have accepted it and considered himself privileged as such a young artist. If he had not taken offence, he could have been a member of the Royal Academy by now. The witness denies, as Martin claimed, that the hanging is fairer on the Continent. As for the damaged painting, the witness suggests that this must simply have been an accident.

Similarly Archer Shee considers the advantage that Royal Academicians have to varnish and retouch their paintings as being perfectly acceptable. Again it is these

advantages, the witness suggests, that encourage the best artists. However he has not made much use of this by law and would not object to it being abolished. He says that the society members are keen that the exhibition looks its best and would extend the privilege to every other artist but that, with so many exhibitors, it is not practicable. He claims also to have waited "...for days before I could get even to see whether a picture of mine wanted to be varnished, because there were scaffolds and ladders over and above it, and members at work upon them".<sup>290</sup> Mr. Hutt suggests that this privilege is extended to all exhibitors in other institutions, but the witness claims that "...other exhibitions have no reference to the academy". Again when Mr. Ewart asks "...[b]ut the persons who hang the pictures, and the persons who criticise the hanging of the pictures, and the persons who judge finally of the correct decision of the hanging committee are all academicians", Archer Shee considers this is unavoidable.<sup>291</sup>

Mr. Hutt asks whether the foundation of the Royal Academy marked an improvement in the arts, in this country. The witness does, and uses Mr. Martin's talents to evidence this. The questioner (still Hutt) asks about the artists previous to the Royal Academy, intimating that there have not been any better artists since Hogarth, Reynolds and Gainsborough. Archer Shee considers that although Reynolds is perhaps unequalled, Gainsborough is certainly bettered. He suggests that where there was Reynolds, now there are fifty good artists.

Archer Shee suggests that the advancement of art has been through the natural process of the gradual and continual encouragement of the best artists to be eminent members of an eminent organisation. Rather than a mere private organisation as it has been portrayed, the members such as Sir David Wilkie and Sir Francis Chantrey are a far from being "...selfish traders, sacrificing the best

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<sup>290</sup> SC36 q. 2020, p. 167.

<sup>291</sup> SC36 q. 2023, p. 167.



interests of the art to their personal views”.<sup>292</sup> If the organisation was based on these motives, then men of this calibre would not stand for it, or support it.

Though there are privileges for members, the witness considers that there is equality of opportunity for non-members, including Mrs. Carpenter, Messrs. Simpson, Charles Landseer, Roberts, Partridge, Morton and others. He suggests that they do not complain because “...perhaps, at an earlier period of their career, some work of theirs, which they conceived to be of considerable consequence, may not have been placed to their satisfaction in the exhibition. They do not on that account fall foul of the academy, and with a kind of parricidal spirit, assail and slander the institution to which they are indebted for the best part of their education”.<sup>293</sup>

Next Mr. Ewart moves on to the appropriateness of the Royal Academy occupying the National Gallery. The witness considers that, although the National Gallery is “...a structure erected for the purpose of a national gallery and a royal academy...not so extensive as a great nation like this would be expected to produce; but I say that that part of the structure which is to be devoted to the National Gallery”, that it is large enough for the national collection at present.<sup>294</sup> The witness is aware that the allocation of the Royal Academy to half of the National Gallery is on the same grounds as that of the present quarters as Somerset House. These quarters were presented by the favour of the King, along with the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries. Mr. Ewart suggests that public paid for the apartments at Somerset House and the national Gallery have a right to claim some view on how the space is used. The witness explains that the removal of the Royal Academy from Somerset House to the National Gallery was to provide a larger exhibition space for the annual exhibition. The chairman asks whether “...for the good of the national” the Royal Academy

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<sup>292</sup> SC36 q. 2027, p. 168.

<sup>293</sup> SC36 q. 2029, p. 168.

<sup>294</sup> SC36 q. 2035, pp. 168-169.

would move out of the National Gallery.<sup>295</sup> The witness does not think that there can be much more ‘good’ for the nation than having the Royal Academy in residence. He suggests

I look upon it that a garden is of more consequence than a granary; and you may heap up a *hortus-siccus* of art without producing any of the salutary effects which never fail to result from the operations of such a school as the Royal to the Royal Academy, if they were to be removed, in order to make room for even the best works of the old masters.<sup>296</sup>

The question finishes with a question about the professor of perspective. Sir Martin admits that there have been no lectures (and therefore no payment for them), but that

[t]he academy have forborne to press on the professor of perspective the execution of his duties, as strongly as they might perhaps be expected to do, - partly because many of the members consider the process of lecturing as ill-calculated to explain the science of perspective; - and partly from a delicacy which cannot perhaps be perfectly justified, but which arises from the respect they feel for one of the greatest artists of the age in which we live.<sup>297</sup>

**19 July 1836 Mr. John Landseer qq. 2043-2046, pp. 170-171**

**Members present: Ewart (Chairman), Hutt, Strutt, Hope, Bowring, and Brotherton.**

Mr. Ewart asks if Mr. Landseer is an associate of the Royal Academy, and he says he is a member. On the subject of the effects of academies, he mentions a list of authors who have written against academies, Voltaire, Fuseli, Payne, Knight, Sir M. A. Shee. But he notes that although they are great writers, and he agrees that not academies have never produced great artists, he does not think that this

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<sup>295</sup> SC36 q. 2039, p. 169.

<sup>296</sup> SC36 q. 2041, p. 169.

<sup>297</sup> SC36 q. 2024, p. 170.



means academies are useless as institutions, generally. “I think academies have failed of their ostensible purpose, because Europe has not yet beheld a well constituted academy of art”.<sup>298</sup> The witness quotes Fuseli on academies<sup>299</sup> and disagrees with the writer because, in his opinion, the Royal Academy “...exhibits more *individual varieties* of style”.<sup>300</sup> He continues

[t]here is less in it of that faultless nonsense and inanity which Mr. Knight ably and justly condemns as too generally resulting from the trammelled ignorance of pictures copying, and more of that spontaneous and vigorous growth of original art, which the enterprise of taste and the energy of genius redeems from the depths of meditation, or snatches from nature, where in her agitated, transient, or mutable moods.<sup>301</sup>

Next the witness quotes Martin Archer Shee:

Whatever advantages may be supposed to arise from public exhibitions of the works of taste, there is reason to fear that they are more than counterbalanced by the evils which attend them, and the experience of all countries in which they have been introduced, may lead us to doubt whether, on the whole, they contribute more to promote or impede the attainment of excellence in art. In this country, it must be acknowledged, that our greatest painters have not been the fruit of this tree. Reynolds, West, Barry, Hogarth, Wilson, Gainsborough, were ripe in fame and merit, before it can be said to have been planted among us; and if we look abroad to the old masters we find the most eminent amongst them were those who flourished antecedent to such establishments.<sup>302</sup>

The chairman then asks the witness whether he and Mr. Heath attempted to get engraving put on the same level as painting and architecture in the Royal Academy. This was not successful even though Mr. Landseer presented “...a memorial, on the state and claims of the art of engraving to academical

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<sup>298</sup> SC36 q. 2045, p. 170.

<sup>299</sup> “We have now been in possession of an academy for more than half a century. All the intrinsic means of forming a style, alternate at our command, *professional instruction has never ceased to direct the student*; premiums are distributed to rear talent and stimulate ambition, and stipends are granted to relieve the wants of genius and finish *education*. And, what is the result? If we apply to our exhibition, what does it present in the aggregate but a gorgeous display of *varied powers*?” (SC36 q. 2045, p. 170).

<sup>300</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>301</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>302</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 170-171.

cultivation”,<sup>303</sup> to each member of the Royal Academy. He reads some of the introduction out and then leaves the memorial with the Committee.

**19 July 1836 Sir John Dean Paul qq. 2047-2116, pp. 171-177**

Mr. Hutt first asks the witness whether he has considered the effects of academies. Sir John thinks that the impression that the public has is that the Select Committee is attacking the academies personally, when actually what the witness thinks needs to be questioned is the system itself, not the individuals. He claims that if they are managed well, academies can be very useful to a society. He considers that members of such an institution would always work together and put their own paintings in the best place, it would only be natural. The main problem with the system is that in the annual exhibition landscapes and portraits, watercolours and oils are placed side by side. This does not have a beneficial effect on either work. Furthermore, portraits of Kings and Queens are placed in prominent places, but this is through etiquette and is not beneficial either. The witness's idea is that the exhibition should be in different classes, depending on genres. Sir John also considers that financial gain should not be the goal of the exhibition, as this may prevent people from choosing to exhibit certain genres of work. Furthermore, the combination of pictures at present causes the retouching of paintings because, when an artist finds his/her work next to a gaudy painting, they will colour it to compete with their neighbours and spoil their own painting. Also, even when a great artist has sent a bad painting (as has happened at present), the work is still hung in a good place. The paintings should be positioned according to merit. However on this point he again wants to “...impress upon the Committee...if your object is to improve the arts of this country, you must put money out of the question”.<sup>304</sup> The witness also notes that there are not enough lectures on the different branches of art.

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<sup>303</sup> SC36 q. 2046, p. 171.

<sup>304</sup> SC36 q. 2055, p. 172.



Mr. Hutt asks what state manufactures are in at present and the witness answers that they are in a very poor state. He recently visited a china manufactory at Worcester and saw the bad work that was being done in the painting room. The master did not have an education in art and did not know what was good and bad. The china painters were not educated in even elementary art and they copies what was given to them (they had been trained in mixing colours). "These very young men had sufficient proficiency to have copied a good subject as easily as a bad one, but from going on with these miserable originals they could not improve, and the consequence is, that manufacture has fallen off most materially."<sup>305</sup>

The witness thinks it would be very desirable to have a school in this country, not simply because work of manufacturers here is behind that of other countries, but also because it is even behind the standards of design in the eighteenth-century, particularly those of Wedgwood. He

...was a man of great taste; he had a great passion for the Etruscan and all the Italian works. He had a very fine taste; and if you look now to many of the old Wedgwood things, where there is that embossed white over the blue, they are more beautiful than any thing you can obtain now. That seems to have been entirely lost sight of.<sup>306</sup>

Dr. Bowring asks whether the forms of the china, as well as the incorrect drawing, were at fault. The witness considers that the whole output was generally of a "false taste"<sup>307</sup> and were overworked copies of old Dresden china. "You never can improve if you have no school. Those boys who draw exceedingly well, and paint exceedingly well, were copying from subjects that were done no better than a schoolboy could execute".<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> SC36 q. 2058, p. 172 q. 2058, p. 172.

<sup>306</sup> SC36 q. 2060, pp. 172-173.

<sup>307</sup> SC36 q. 2061, p. 173.

<sup>308</sup> SC36 q. 2061, p. 173.

Mr. Ewart asks about the opportunity of painting from nature, but although the witness concedes that this would be a good thing, that students must be first taught to draw because it would be "...like attempting to speak a foreign language before you have learned the grammar".<sup>309</sup>

The witness says that certainly there were no china-painters able to produce their own patterns. He then explains that they possessed no ability to discern what was good and bad

...so much so, that in some of the landscapes I asked the young men, in order to show whether they knew what was false in the perspective, whether the horizontal line did not run up when it ought to run down, and questions of that sort, which satisfied me they were not aware that it was bad, but they were aware of it when I pointed it out to them.<sup>310</sup>

Mr. Hutt asks whether the witness thinks there should be schools of design in England and whether he considers that the British Museum is open enough to the public. Sir John considers that the British Museum is open enough but that

...if there were professors who had classes, and who could read lectures on these things to a class of students in the British Museum, with these fine models before them, it would be of great use; and if that was followed up by annual examination of the students, of what they had learned and what they had collected, both from the professors and what they had seen, and that there were small prizes at the examination at the end of the year, I think you would find that the school would be exceedingly useful.<sup>311</sup>

The same questioner then asks about the idea of 'diffusing' casts from antique statuary and good prints to all the large towns in the country. The witness thinks that this would be a good idea because people in Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle have probably (in the main) never seen good examples of high art. He also suggests that copies of the whole loggia of the Vatican would be really

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<sup>309</sup> SC36 q. 2064, p. 173.

<sup>310</sup> SC36 q. 2066, p. 173.



influential, and that they could be engraved in stone quite cheaply. Generally the witness

...would not admit young men to any distinguished situation, until they had made some progress in the study of those works. I think those very boys that I saw at Worcester, would as easily copy the fine designs of Raphael as they do the bad things I saw, but there is a general want of taste throughout the country. It has certainly made some advance, but both educated and uneducated are only creeping out of the shell; it is quite in its infancy...<sup>312</sup>

Dr. Bowring asks about “[t]he presence of the wandering Savoyards and Italians, who have brought to this country foreign specimens of art which they sell at a cheap rate; their success is evidence of an improved taste amongst the public”.<sup>313</sup> The witness agrees with this statement.

On the subject of galleries being opened on a Sunday, Sir John does not see any harm in it. In fact, to the contrary, he has found that there has been a beneficial moral effect (on the evidence of the practice in foreign countries).

## Report from the Select Committee on Arts and their connexion with Manufactures

16 August 1836

The Report opened by suggesting that it was with regret that the conclusion drawn from the evidence given before the Committee was that there was very little support and encouragement for the fine or manufacturing arts in Britain. This strong impression, continues the Report introduction, is provided when one views the facts in total - no instruction for workers in manufacture, the absence of galleries with free entry and the only recent establishment of a national

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<sup>311</sup> SC36 q. 2067, p. 173.

<sup>312</sup> SC36 q. 2068, p. 173.

collection. How ironic this appears when one considers that a powerful and manufacturing nation has none of these resources, whilst “[i]n many despotic countries far more development has been given to genius, and greater encouragement to industry, by a more liberal diffusion of the enlightening influence of the Arts”.<sup>314</sup>

The Report uses the evidence of John Martin, John Bowring, Charles Harriot Smith, John B. Papworth and Charles R. Cockerell to explain that this need is evidence by the British liking for inferior design such as the Louis XIV style and Elizabethan architecture. However, the Report goes on to claim that not all workers are convinced by these styles and want to learn about superior design. Thus the willingness that they have makes it even more lamentable that no provision is offered to them.

The Report provides some discussion of how its conclusions have been founded by noting that the overwhelming comparison with French design had led the Committee to consider the causes of that nation’s superiority in the field. Thus models of French management of design have largely contributed to the agenda supplied by the Report. The important qualities of French design are then outlined, particularly the availability of good designers for reasonable prices (as opposed to the situation in Britain), allowing a manufacturer to employ more than one designer as well as a knowledgeable *metteur en carte* if the business is woven textiles. The proliferation of good designers in France would appear to be due to the many schools teaching the subject which exist all around the country, as well as the accessibility of museums, libraries and exhibitions. Thus not only are there many specialist designers in France, but there is a general love of art among the population as a whole. However the Report also notes that there is a similar system in other parts of Europe where the main *Gewerbe-Institut* in Berlin has constant correspondence with manufacturers and governments all over the

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<sup>313</sup> SC36 q. 2069, p. 173.



surrounding regions. Bavaria has thirty-three schools in which outline drawing is an aspect of the teaching system there (the Report should contain other details from foreign schools but these are delayed to a later date).

However, there are some institutions that have aided the art of design in the British Isles. These are specifically the Board of Trustees in Edinburgh and the Royal Society of Dublin. It is hoped also that the new school of British Architects will provide some provision along with the more established Mechanics' Institutes. Most notably "His Majesty's Government has this year, for the first time, proposed a vote to the Estimates for the establishment of a Normal School of Design".<sup>315</sup> On this, the Report warns that the curriculum must cover much practical application of instruction and should not be merely theoretical. This system it suggests could use local schools in areas where certain manufactures thrive, while if a centralised system is established, there should still be the emphasis on the destination, i.e. the chosen trade of the student. It is urged that "...the interposition of the Government should not extend to interference; it should aim at the development and extension of art; but it should neither control its action, nor force its cultivation".<sup>316</sup>

The same could also be said of any proposed system of public galleries or museums where various towns must be brought in to share the establishment and management of the institutions. On the subject of exhibitions, the Report emphasises the importance of free entry, although it claims that this would only be advantageous to a viewing public if the displays were regular and of good quality, circumstances that are not always the case at present. Here, it suggests, even those who can afford to visit exhibitions receive no added advantage. Exhibitions must also be opened after working hours if they are to attract the

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<sup>314</sup> *Report* p. iii.

<sup>315</sup> *Report* p. v.

<sup>316</sup> *Report*, p. v.

lower class. At a later point in the Report, this subject was added to.<sup>317</sup> Here the writers noted that there was an increasingly popular system whereby a small contribution by many subscribers ensured a substantial amount of money for the purchase of works of art. This was called the *Kunst-Vereine* and was particularly popular in Germany.

There are suggestions as to what a museum should contain for the benefit of the viewing public. These are casts of the best specimens of Sculpture (which can be sent all around the country), including work by Raphael, design from Pompeii as well as Renaissance works of art. These should be added to by finding specimens that exhibit a successful collaboration between the manufacturer and the artist from any era and any country. The gallery, however is not the only arena for this type of display, and the Report quotes James Nasmyth who suggested that factories could also house a small collection that would provide visual education for the workers whilst they were eating. These should be Classical forms that exhibit a geometrical basis, so ensuring the imbibing of these principles by the workers. The Report also mentions Richard Renaigle's evidence regarding geometry and suggests that such a knowledge actively aids the worker in designing for manufacture.

The importance of botanical knowledge is also emphasised by the Report and again there is a comparison drawn with French provision that has resulted in "...their imitations of plants... acknowledged to be more correct than ours".<sup>318</sup> To support this comment, the evidence of David Ramsey Hay is flagged. In addition, the Report also suggests that texts can provide a valuable resource for design and cites the works of M. Beuth who is the director of the *Gewerbe-Institut* of Berlin (the titles of which are at the bottom of the page). It is noted that these provide, through the medium of copper-engraving, models from antiquity, the Renaissance, the Orient and Islamic designs covering architectural

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<sup>317</sup> *Report* p. viii.



construction as well as more domestic objects. These texts are at the expense of the Prussian Government. However these are not the only tastefully illustrated sources and the Report notes that similar images are available through cheap publications such as the *Mechanics' Magazine*, the *Penny* and *Saturday* magazines, as well as the *Magasin-Pittoresque* and *Magasin-Universel* of France and Germany. On this subject the Report offers its resounding approval:

Nothing is more cheering than to find public instruction, and consequently public happiness, thus extending with the increase of national capital, and conveying intelligence and civilization in so cheap a form to the remotest cottage in the kingdom. Such instruments may be said to form the paper-circulation of knowledge; and, while the friends of education lament that the people are yet most insufficiently provided with places of instruction, they are somewhat consoled by the reflection that these works convey instruction to the very dwellings of the people.<sup>319</sup>

However it is emphasised that there is a contrast between the works supplied in Germany and Britain. That being the sponsorship of the Prussian Government in publication and the lack of Governmental support in British literary production. The Report then goes on to suggest that other ideas could also be adapted from Prussian management of design, particularly the curriculum for education in design that encompasses a set of elementary principles. These being the knowledge of form through the "...adoption of a bold style of geometrical and outline-drawing".<sup>320</sup>

The Report also suggested that if a system were established of this nature, that correspondence between institutions and the Government should be established by the appointment of a Minister of Education, which is a more general question at present being discussed in Parliament. The inclusion of art provision within a more general scheme of education would be a new development, the Report

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<sup>318</sup> *Report* p. vi.

<sup>319</sup> *Report* p. vi.

<sup>320</sup> *Report* p. vii.

continues, as the teaching of art or design has been excluded from already established centres of education such as universities and public schools.

The writers of the Report then move on to discuss what has been identified as another factor holding back the development of British superior design – the lack of copyright. Many witnesses have testified to the complexity and inadequacy of existing laws, as well as the damage that has been done to their businesses and design aspirations. The best practice as regards the management of a cheap and accessible system would appear, suggests the Report, to be the French system that was described at length in the evidence of Dr. Bowring. He noted that there were local tribunals comprising of specialised people, such as workmen and manufacturers themselves, who could decipher and recognise the qualities of invention within design. However, it was noted that a local tribunal may not resolve the piracy that occurs over some distances where a design could be reproduced without the knowledge of the originator. It is also suggested that the establishment of a better management of judging copyright be accompanied by a system of registration that would include a varying duration of copyright protection. Finally the Report stresses that “...any comprehensive measure for the protection of designs in Manufactures... [would] be well worthy of the serious attention of the Government”.<sup>321</sup>

The next issue deemed important for mention by the Report is the strangulation of creativity and invention caused by many of the excise laws that tax certain raw materials such as brick, paper and glass, thus affecting the building, interior design and textile industries (paper makes Jacquard loom cards). Again this is seen in opposition to the freedom enjoyed by the French.

Following up on the subject of exhibitions, the Report claims that the inquiry was also drawn into the question of academies and their management and here the

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<sup>321</sup> *Report* p. vii.



writers has some detailed opinions based on the evidence of artists themselves, such as George Rennie, Benjamin Robert Haydon, Frederick Hurlestone and George Foggo, as well as writers about art, such as Gustave Friendrich Waagen. However by way of introduction to the subject, it is 'political economists' who are quoted, the writers note that this group "...have denied the advantages of such institutions...",<sup>322</sup> as well as M. H. Vernet who is the Director of the French Academy at Rome. Following this general criticism, the Report becomes more specific claiming that an academic system breeds the repetition of academic rules and "...prevents the artist from catching the feeling and spirit of the great master whom he studies...".<sup>323</sup> This the Report considers could be resolved by following Waagan's advice to make academies into schools organised around the studios of private teachers. If such action is not taken the result, warns the Report, will be a denegration of art "...into mannerism... and when they assume too exclusive and oligarchical a character, they damp the moral independence of the artist and narrow the proper basis of all intellectual excellence – mental freedom".<sup>324</sup> Perhaps instead of this unsatisfactory situation a future Government would support "...the principle of free competition in art",<sup>325</sup> awarding prizes and supporting co-equal rather than hierarchical and closed societies.

From here the Report becomes more specific and introduces an example of such a closed society, the Royal Academy, though it begins by acknowledging that the institution has been associated with some great artists. The writers highlight a series of problems with the Royal Academy beginning with the restriction placed on members or proposed members on exhibiting at other institutions. This is in addition to the secrecy surrounding the management of the Royal Academy, as well as the privileges of the members of the Academy in securing patrons of art at the institution's annual dinner. At the yearly exhibition, it is only the Academicians, the Report claims, who are able to place and clean their work

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<sup>322</sup> *Report* p. viii.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*

before the display is opened to the public; a ruling that simply strengthens the impression that the Royal Academy is exclusive. Well-respected artists, such as John Martin and Benjamin Haydon, the Report claims, have found that they have had more encouragement abroad than from the Royal Academy. In addition, the education offered by the institution has been flawed, and there have been some problems with the delivery of lectures, for example the architectural instruction has not been provided for some years.

Of particular importance for the Report is the lack of encouragement given to engraving, which is of a high quality in Britain. In the Royal Academy, engravers are not allowed to become fully-fledged Academicians but suffer the humiliation of being only Associates. This is in opposition to the academies on the Continent that embrace engraving as equal to painting and sculpting. If the general quality of art is of importance to the Academy, then it would seem strange to discourage a successful branch of British art. The suspicion that the cause of art in Britain is not always at the forefront of the agenda in the Royal Academy is further advanced by the comments of foreign critics on the predominance of portrait painting in the annual exhibition. Portrait painting is not considered a high branch of art and it should therefore not be centre-stage in the exhibition of a national institution.

Further evidence of the problems with the management of the Royal Academy was given by William Wilkins, the architect of the new National Gallery. This proposed building is also promised as a home for the Royal Academy resulting in the restriction on the space available for the national collection. The occupation of the building is again indicative, suggests the Report, of the "...ambiguous, half-public half-private, character of the Academy".<sup>326</sup> Furthermore on the subject of the new National Gallery, the writers of the Report make it clear that in comparison with other nations, the ambition of the project and the restrictions

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<sup>325</sup> Ibid.



and errors that appear to surround it are very great indeed. The building is not fire-proofed affording no protection for the national collection and the entire scheme has been restricted in terms of space after public complaints that the façade of St. Martin's Church would be obscured by the new construction. These circumstances the Report sees in opposition to the magnificence of the Galleries of Sculpture and Painting at Munich.

On the subject of galleries and their organisation, the Report further notes that it is a recommendation of some of the witnesses, particularly Gustave Waagen, that there should be a catalogue with a description of the paintings in the national collection, available for the public. In addition to this, it is pointed out that the Munich and Berlin Galleries also have a "descriptive map"<sup>327</sup> by which to guide and inform the spectator, allowing both their orientation around the collection and their education. This is accompanied by details of the painter and their school under every work of art. Again, it is stressed that these teaching devices are only valuable if the galleries are accessible to ordinary working people, noting that "[i]t is far better for the nation to pay a few additional attendants in the rooms, than to close the doors on the laborious classes, to whose recreation and refinement a national collection ought to be principally devoted".<sup>328</sup>

On the subject of the organisation of a collection, it is also suggested that for the encouragement of British art, there should be a policy for purchasing the work of living British artists that it is deemed will stand "...the test of time and criticism".<sup>329</sup> These should be exhibited in their own room, as well as there being a room for excellent British engravers, which would also encourage that art. Further to the details of what should form the national collection, the Report also suggests that the cartoons by Raphael at Hampton Court should be brought to the site in Pall-Mall and that some attention must be given to paintings that are

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<sup>326</sup> *Report* p. xi.

<sup>327</sup> *Report* p. x.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*

decaying in the national collection, particularly a piece by Sebastian del Piombo. In order to maintain and extend the collection, the Report also suggests that it would be wise to encourage individuals to bequeath money as well as paintings.

How the national collection is extended is given much attention in the Report. It is put forward that there should be careful consideration of the right personnel for any buying Committee as in Britain “[i]t would seem that the majority of Trustees ordinarily selected for such purposes in this country are chosen rather on account of their elevated rank and their possession of pictures than for any peculiar professional ability”.<sup>330</sup> This is in contrast to other countries such as France and Prussia where the task of selecting and purchasing for the national collection is undertaken by “...artists and *experts*, or persons who have devoted themselves to the study of the value of pictures”.<sup>331</sup> This system is deemed to be more professional and therefore fairer by the Report and it is also suggested that the same type of panel should be used to judge on plans for public architectural works, as there is in France. The Report ends by suggesting that new buildings are also potentially sites for new sculpture and paintings, which it is claimed should also be commissioned as “[t]he habitual contemplation of noble works...is worthy of the intelligence of a great and civilized nation”.<sup>332</sup>

To finish the writers of the Report note that:

It will give Your Committee the sincerest gratification if the result of their inquiry... tend in any degree to raise the character of a profession which is said to stand much higher among foreign nations than, in our own; to infuse, even remotely, into an industrious and enterprising people, a love of art, and to teach them to respect and venerate the name of “Artist”.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> *Report* p. x.

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### Appendix 3: Mogg's Strangers' Guide to London

